

Police Kill 10 Ogoni Hoodlums

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No fewer than 10 heavily-armed Ogoni youths, suspected to be robbers, have been killed by policemen on patrol in the last three weeks between the Bori Junction and Imo River Bridge separating Rivers and Akwa Ibom states.

Police sources at the Bori Area Command told our correspondent exclusively that most of the youths killed were between the ages of 15 and 18 and armed with AK-47 rifles.

We gathered that they were felled as they attempted to run into the bush, although the police hardly reported any exchange of gunfire with the alleged hoodlums.

The axis of the road between Bori and the bridge had become very notorious for robbery activities perpetrated by what the police source called "under-aged armed robbers," forcing police authorities to step up patrol overnight. In one of such incidents last week, the patrol team reportedly intercepted the robbers about 8 pm as they attempted to rob three staff of

Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC), who claimed to be on an emergency trip. The incident reportedly forced the police to put up 24-hour patrol along the road.

Although, sources said, the armed gangs hardly snatch motor vehicles, they normally rid occupants of vehicles they accost of handsets and money. Lately, the gang, according to the police, had resorted to ordering female occupants of vehicles into bushes where they are raped.

Last May, a female Permanent Secretary travelling

in a chauffeur-driven car was reportedly raped alongside her daughter during the early hours of the day along the road and the sum of N210,000 stolen from her. Police sources reported that the gang also snatch brand new motorcycles from their victims along the road.

As a result of the insecurity along this axis of the East-West Road, the police advised the public to avoid early morning and night movements along the road, lamenting however that the gang could strike at anytime of the day.