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Tuesday, 25 August 2009

Breaking News:



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Two Killed In Awka Banks' Robbery

By Okey Maduforo (Awka) and Chukwujekwu Ilozue (Onitsha)

Seminal brigandage in Anambra State became bloody on Monday, with the loss of two lives in Awka, exactly a week after Nollywood actor, Pete Edochie, was released after his kidnap in Onitsha, and a day after luxury bus operator, Godwin Ubaka Okeke, was abducted by gunmen now demanding N500 million in ransom. Armed men robbed banks in Awka, and in the process killed two people and injured about 17 others.

The robbers, who dressed in black suit and came in a red Pathfinder jeep and a pick up truck, began the operation at 1.50 p.m. at the First Bank.

They could not gain access to the strong room, but robbed customers and stole money from the counter.

The robbers later blew open the security glass entrance of Bank PHB, but could not get in, then proceeded to the United Bank for Africa (UBA) and Zenith Bank.

Those killed were a female customer at UBA and a security man at Bank PHB.

Police officers came up in a convoy of pick up vans and Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs) and engaged in a gun battle for about 20 minutes.

The robbers abandoned their jeep and escaped in a Mitshubuihi bus snatched from Eastern Mass Transit Company, and drove off through the Umuogbu end of the city.

About 40 minutes after the robbers escaped, members of Anambra Vigilante Services (AVS), known as the Scorpion Squad, which was inaugurated last Thursday, paraded Awka with axes and pump action guns.

Police Commissioner, Uzor Amakulor, confirmed the incident, and stressed that the police responded fast, which prevented the robbers from having a field day as happened in the past.

Those who abducted Okeke have opened negotiation with his family demanding N500 million ransom.

The police said they have not made any inroad in the investigation of the incident.

Okeke, proprietor of GUO Group of Companies, part of which is a transport business, was abducted on Sunday at All Saints Cathedral in Onitsha as he stepped out of a church service.

On Monday, the family said the abductors insisted on N500 million and have refused to reduce it to N300 million.

Amakulor confirmed that he is aware of the ransom placed on his head.

Public discussion in Onitsha, where Okeke is based, is dominated by the kidnap of a man well known for his toughness and security consciousness.

His abduction has heightened fear that no one may be safe in Anambra.

Reports said Okeke had been the target of kidnappers for some time but nobody could touch him because of his tight private security.

It is widely believed that bullets cannot penetrate his body.

The best bet of the kidnappers was in the church where Okeke was more relaxed as he worshipped God.

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Editorial/ Letters



Towards Credible Polls In 2011

As the nation inches towards the 2011 general elections, it is difficult to find any indications that things will be done differently from what was the case in April 2007, when large-scale manipulation, intimidation and violence were taken to unimaginable heights characterised the conduct of the polls

Op-Ed/ Comments

Africa, United Culturally Or Perish

Afenifere - that is, one who not only loves others as himself, but who seeks the good of others the same way as he seeks his own: this name adopted by the pan-Yoruba socio-cultural group speaks volumes of the attitude of Africans to friends and foes alike before the coming of foreign religious practices to this continent

A Race Towards Industrial Development

Given the downturn in the world economy, global attention is increasingly being focused on the manufacturing sector as the panacea for the nation's development challenges.

CBN/Entrepreneurship Centre: Empowerment Or Fraud?

When the former Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Professor Charles Chukwuma Soludo, came out with the laudable initiative of reducing unemployment, many Nigerians, mostly the unemployed, heaved a sigh of relief and applauded the bold and patriotic step

Columnist

Conversation of an Angry man Edochie: Crisis And Opportunity

My friend, Prof. Chinua Achebe, is a great guy! He wrote the bestselling classic, "Things Fall Apart" in the days when men were men and women wore long skirts and gowns.

Candour's Niche Petroleum Subsidy And Its Global Phenomenon

"A healthy nation is a wealthy nation" says the adage. The future of any country's survival, and that of its corporate institutions, depend largely on how healthy or otherwise its government is, especially in responsive to the yearnings of its citizens.

The Roundtable The Banking Sector's "Dirty Five" (I)

On Friday last week, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) wielded the big stick on the riotous banking industry. Five CEOs - and their executive directors -were sacked from office in one fell swoop with immediate effect and 'automatic alacrity'!

Laser Clintonian Branding

Was it right for the United States of America's Secretary of State, Mrs. Hillary Clinton, to have taken Nigeria to the cleaners, as she did last week, on our nation's own soil;

Speaking Out Visioning Without Vision

I should perhaps start this article with a correction to my article of last week. The title of the article should have been "When Government Fails to be Boko Halal" and not,

Independent Opinion Poll
Do you support the level of force used by security in silencing the uprising of Boko Haram sect and its leader?
<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Uncertain
<input type="button" value="Submit Vote"/> Current Results

