

Gunman shot dead as Rivers police free hostages

THE Rivers State police command has rescued two Filipino hostages abducted by some gunmen at Elelenwo, near Port Harcourt at the weekend.

One of the suspected kidnappers was shot dead during the rescue operation, while two of the abductors, including Mr. Uche Onwuchekwa, in whose bedroom the hostages were held overnight, are now on the run.

Briefing reporters in his office, the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Felix Ogbaudu, said in response to a tip-off, men

of the Swift Operations Squad (SOS) were drafted to Elelenwo town, Onwuchekwa's residence where a shoot-out ensued.

The police commissioner said during the operation, one of the gunmen was killed, while two, including Mr. Onwuchekwa, the owner of the house in which the hostages were held, escaped.

The charms and amulets worn by the killed militant and other apparatus used in the operation including police uniform and shoes were dis-

played to reporters.

The wife and children of the fleeing Onwuchekwa were taken into custody by press time.

Handing over the freed men to Mr Uche Obilor, Executive Director, Seacor, the company for which the kidnapped hostages worked, the police boss warned those involved in criminal activities to desist forthwith, saying that the police would no longer tolerate acts of intimidation on innocent foreign nationals doing legitimate business in the state.