

streets.

While stating that the presence of the military on the streets was not only undermining the Constitution, Ikponmwon added that the deployment of soldiers to the streets ran against the principles of democracy.

Suggesting the duties expected from the Army and the Police in a democratic system, he said that military could only come out when law and order had broken down.

He lamented that the Police that should maintain peace, law and order was poorly funded, and lack the capability to carry out its functions.

One killed in police, robbers' shoot-out

DELTA State's crime fighting outfit, the Quick Response Squad (QRS) yesterday engaged a four-man robbery gang in a fierce gun duel.

The shoot-out occurred shortly after the criminals snatched a Toyota bus, marked AH 543 EPR belonging to the Church of the Anointing, Enerhen.

The hoodlums, believed to be one of the deadliest gangs operating in the area, seized the city for several hours before the QRS stepped in.

From Shola O'Neil, Warri

The battle, which eyewitnesses said was reminiscent of the dark days of the Warri crisis, lasted for over an hour before the hoodlums succumbed to the superior power and tactics of policemen attached to the QRS.

At the end of the gun-battle one of the gang members was felled by police while three others, who suffered severe gun wounds, were apprehended by the gallant team.

It was learnt that the security team was led by a Police Inspector, who was simply identified as Joseph.

Among the victims of the robbery spree was a lady, whose car, marked Ekiti AM 421 ADK, was snatched by the hoodlums along the Effurun/Sapele Road at about 10pm.

Sympathisers later alerted the police through the emergency numbers, a development which led to a hot chase of the criminals along major parts of the city.

The hoodlums at a location along the NPA Expressway, opened fire on police team which returned fire.

A police shot gun marked 023381 that was allegedly snatched from a mobile policeman was among items recovered from the hoodlums.

Attempts to reach the command's Public Relations Officer, ASP Ishaku Banawu proved abortive, but the Commander of the QRS, Folurunso Ajayi, a Superintendent of Police, confirmed the incident.

Onitsha filling station collapse claims life

ONE person was killed and four others injured yesterday when the hole they were digging caved in from the top, trapping all of them.

The incident occurred at about 8 a.m. on Oguta Road, Onitsha, Anambra State, where a new filling station is being built. The owner who is yet to

From Adimike George, Onitsha

be identified, had hired some labourers to dig some holes for the installation of some fuel tanks.

All the diggers embarked on the job simultaneously but as the exercise progressed, the upper chamber of the hole suddenly caved in and buried them alive.

It took about two hours to exhume their bodies and one of the labourers was found dead, the four others were rushed to an undisclosed hospital because the shovel used in the rescue mission was unknowingly used in inflicting serious injuries on them.

When *The Nation* visited the scene of the incident, it was said the same hole caved in sometime last week and buried three people alive before they were rescued by passers by.

Speaking to *The Nation* in his office, the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of inland town Onitsha, Mr. Ntomchukwu (CSP) revealed that the same incident had occurred the same time last year within the same area and claimed one life.

The Police Area Commander for Onitsha, Mr. Rasheed Akintunde, an Assistant Commissioner of Police, who confirmed the incident, said he was yet to get a detailed report of the story from the DPO, Central Police Station Onitsha, who is handling the case.

Delta opposition parties regret endorsing Uduaghan