

# Kidnappers invade market in search of runaway member

- Two killed

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***By Damian Duruiheoma, Owerri***

Gunmen have invaded the Afor Awo Market in Awo Omamma community in Oru East Local Government Area of Imo State.

The invasion, which took place on Wednesday, threw the community into panic.

No fewer than two persons were killed in the incident. Six others sustained gunshot wounds, while many more were injured in the resulting stampede.

The gunmen were said to be chasing one of their members.

Panic-stricken traders and residents of the adjoining villages hurriedly closed their shops.

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*The Nation* gathered that a five-year-old boy was among the dead.

Local sources speculated that the invasion was tied to sharing of booty.

According to them, the three hoodlums had a kidnap operation early this year but one of them ran away with the ransom cash, said to be in millions.

He was said to have used part of the money to buy a Lexus car, started building a house and was living large in the village.

His gang members traced him to the village, but upon sighting them, he sought safety among traders at Afor Awo Market.

The gang members saw him and started chasing him all the way from Ubachima village. He came out at the Afor Market and wanted to drive to Junction, but unfortunately they double-crossed him and started shooting. He ran into the market, and that was when the bullets started hitting people. He was the only son of his father,” a source said.

Police spokesman Orlando Ikeokwu confirmed the incident.

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