

# Police kill five kidnap suspects in Edo, Kwara

• Three hostages rescued

**T**HE police in Edo State have killed three suspected kidnapers in a shootout, and rescued a 13-month-old baby, deputy police spokesperson Jennifer Iwegbu said yesterday in Benin.

She said: "Distress was raised by distraught residents of Achigbor on Benin-Auchi Road in Uhunmwonde Local Government Area of Edo State, at 1930hrs on September 13, 2022. Police operatives on pin-down, along the axis, immediately mobilised and moved to the scene, where they came to an empty compound that had been vandalised and Elizabeth Ojo, 42, was screaming that her baby was taken away.

"Ojo said some hoodlums, suspected to be kidnapers, vandalised her property and whisked her baby of one year and a month away into the bush.

"The operatives immediately moved into the bush.

From Bisi Olaniyi, Benin City and Adekunle Jimoh, Ilorin

The kidnapers, on sighting the operatives, threw the baby into the bush, and opened fire on them. In the firefight with the police operatives, three of the six kidnapers succumbed to our superior firepower. The others are still on the run, while further bush combing of the general area is still ongoing."

Iwegbu also revealed that the baby was rescued unhurt and handed over to the mother, while one cut-to-size double-barrel gun, a cutlass and battle axe were recovered at the scene.

In Kwara, police and vigilantes early yesterday also engaged some suspected kidnapers in a gunfight in the Shao area of the state.

Two of the suspects were wounded and later died in

hospital, police said.

On Tuesday, one Afusat Lawal and her son Taofeek were abducted in Shao.

Police spokesman Ajayi Okasanmi said that mother and son were "rescued after an intensive and painstaking search".

"The kidnapers were accosted in the bush while sharing the ransom collected from the family of the victims; they opened fire on the operatives immediately they were sighted.

"During exchange of fire, two of the kidnapers that suffered gunshot injuries during the encounter were arrested and taken to the University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital where they were confirmed dead."

A Honda Accord car, one single-barrel gun and an unspecified amount of money were recovered, Okasanmi said.