

Three policemen hospitalised as gunmen attack another station in Abia

• Assailants steal AK47, ammunition • Monarch killed in Ebonyi

GUNMEN have attacked the Nkporo Divisional Police Headquarters in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State.

The gunmen stormed the station in three Toyota Sienna vehicles, and broke into the armoury from where they stole one AK47 rifle with 30 rounds of live ammunition, it was said yesterday.

They were also said to have made away with two riot gunners.

Three policemen on duty sustained injuries and were admitted in hospital.

Sources said the hoodlums may have taken advantage of the ongoing general elections as most police personnel were deployed for election duties across the state.

The Ugwunagbo Police Divisional Headquarters at Ihie in Ugwunagbo council of the state was burnt down recently.

Reacting to the latest incident, police spokesman Geoffrey Ogbonna said: "The hoodlums shot sporadically, dislodged the men on duty, broke into the station's armoury and carted away one AK47 rifle loaded with 30 rounds of live ammunition, two riot gunners and ammunition.

"They also made away with sets of service uniforms kept in the armoury and offices belonging to the armourer and other policemen putting up in the station.

"Three police constables among those on duty were inflicted with varying degrees of injury.

"However, prompt collaborative effort of the police and military resulted in the abandonment and recovery of one Toyota Sienna van together with some service uniforms, shoes and personal effects taken away from the policemen.

"Two of the injured policemen are admitted in the hospital while one was treated and discharged.

"Investigation has commenced with a view to recovering the stolen arms and ammunition as well as arresting the culprits.

"The Commissioner of Police, Abia State Police Command, CP Mustapha Moham-

**From Sunny Nwankwo,
Umuahia and Ogochukwu
Anloke, Abakaliki**

med Bala, during a visit to the scene, accompanied by the DC Operations, DCP E.S. Bretet and later joined by Ohafia LGA Chairman, Chief James Ndukwe, remarked that the porosity of the station made it possible for the hoodlums to invade the premises.

"CP Bala called on the state/local government and other critical stakeholders to embrace the principles of Community Safety Partnership to erect fences that will link up with the existing one around the station.

"Furthermore, the CP requests from the general public, useful information that would help in tracking down the hoodlums and recovery of the firearms."

In Ebonyi, gunmen killed the traditional ruler of the Umueze-okoha community, Ezza North Local Government Area of Ebonyi State, HRH, Igboke Ewa.

Ewa was killed on Monday night in the community for allegedly refusing to support a particular party in the general election.

The All Progressives Congress (APC) in the state condemned the murder of the monarch.

The party in a statement issued by Emeka Nwonu, Ezza North Publicity Secretary, described the killing of Ewa, who is the chairman of the Traditional Rulers Council in Ebonyi Central, as horrible.

The statement reads, "The All Progressives Congress (APC), Ezza North Local Government Area Chapter condemns in strong terms the gruesome murder of the Chairman, Ezza Ezekuna Traditional Rulers Council and Traditional Ruler of Umuezeokoha Community, HRM Ezeogo Christopher Igboke Ewa.

"The killing of the foremost traditional ruler is not only mischievous but also horrible. What pain or disadvantage would the old man cause another in terms of politics?

"He was neither a member of PDP, APC or APGA, why the killing?

"We condole with the fam-

ily of the deceased, the good people of Umuezeokoha, the members of Ezza Ezekuna Council of Traditional Rulers and indeed, the people of Ezza over the heartless killing of the nonagenarian," he said.

Nwonu called on security agents to bring the perpetrators to book.

Governor David Umahi in a statement confirmed the killing.

Umahi in a statement by the Commissioner for Information, Uchenna Orji said the traditional ruler was shot dead for his refusal to support an unnamed candidate during the 25 February presidential and National Assembly election in the state.

The Information Commissioner said Governor Umahi was aware that "a number of candidates have been making provocative and inciting statements about the election results" in the state.

"His Excellency is directing the whole security apparatus of the state to move into Ezza North for a rescue mission. Anybody whose hand is in the killing of His Highness (Ewa) must be arrested immediately," Mr Orji said.

Mr Umahi, the commissioner said, has appealed to leaders in the state and candidates of various political parties dissatisfied with the outcome of the Saturday polls to forward their petitions to the Independent National Electoral Commission or security agencies, instead of making "inciting statements that could generate crisis in the state."

"The governor of Ebonyi State warns that no position in life is worth the life of another person," he stated.

Mr Orji said the governor has resolved that anyone holding a press conference or making posts on social media to incite people will be held responsible for any outbreak of crisis in the state.

He said the governor has also appealed to the people of the state, especially the youths, "not to be used to take the life of another person."