

Police kill eight robbery suspects

Kunle Adeyemi

MEN of the Lagos State Police Command, in three days, killed eight robbery suspects during four different encounters with the men of the underworld.

The Commissioner in charge of the command, Mr. Bashiru Azeez, who described the deaths as unfortunate, noted that most of the robbery suspects died in the hospital.

Bashiru observed that the upsurge in criminal activities

in the state immediately after the elections explained why his men had to take the battle to the bandits.

Speaking through the command's spokesman, Mr. Olubode Ojajuni, on Sunday, the CP said whatever action the command had taken was in line with the Inspector-General of Police, Mr. Mike Okoro's 9-way test.

The 9-way test, amongst others, is designed to rid the nation of corruption and crime.

Three of the dead robbery suspects were said to have shot and killed an occupant of a Totota Sienna car in a bid to snatch the vehicle at Okokomaiko Bus Stop.

Immediately after the incident, the robbers were seen at Ajangbadi area of the state, terrorising residents of Usman Magaji Street.

A distress call that was sent to the police in the area led to an encounter between the bandits and security men. The three of them were reportedly killed on the spot.

Another robbery suspect, whose name was given as Matthew John, was said to have died on the way to the General Hospital. He belonged to a three-man gang that usually operated on the Third Mainland Bridge.

During an encounter with the police, two members of the gang escaped into the bush, but John was not so lucky. Bullets hit and rendered him immobile before he was arrested.

One locally-made pistol was recovered from the battered robbery suspect, who managed to give his name before he died.

Three other robbery suspects, who specialised in dispossessing motorists and passengers of their cell phones, money and other valuables on the Third Mainland Bridge, suffered the same fate.

Ojajuni, who confirmed all the deaths to our correspondent on Sunday, said the command would soon charge all the arrested robbery suspects to court.

Three burnt to death in Warri

Sola Adebayo, Warri

THREE bandits were on Saturday burnt to death in Warri, Delta State.

The marauders were set ablaze at Ekurede-Itsekiri Junction on NPA Bypass, Warri, on Saturday evening.

Our correspondent learnt that the bandits who were operating in a stolen vehicle eventually had an accident at Ekurede-Itsekiri junction, at 6pm.

The four-man robbery gang who escaped unhurt in the accident, it was gathered, thereafter shot sporadically into the air to scare away residents and passers-by.

They also attempted to snatch another vehicle to escape from the scene.

However, trouble started for them when some community youths who were also in possession of arms confronted them in a gun battle.

Reliable police sources

told our correspondent that the hoodlums eventually succumbed to the superior fire power of the youths, after about 30 minutes of gun duel.

Three of them were apprehended by the youths while one escaped through Ekurede-Itsekiri river.

The three were thoroughly beaten up and thereafter set ablaze.

The incident attracted residents of Warri and its environs, who besieged the scene where the remains of the suspected bandits littered the road.

The authorities of 'A' Division of the Nigerian Police Force, Warri, confirmed the incident and noted that the deceased were bandits.

The police, however, warned residents against jungle justice, adding that the deceased should have been handed over to the police for thorough investigation and prosecution.

Murder: Three suspects arrested

Emmanuel Obe, Benin

THE police in Benin have arrested three men in connection with the killing of an auto-mechanic and a driver at Enegebe Street, in the Edo State capital last Friday.

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Mr. Peter Ogboi, who paraded the suspects before newsmen on Saturday, said the deceased, Mr. Eghosa Owie and one Osaherin, were on a debt recovery mission when they were shot by people invited by the debtors.

The suspects, Ikechukwu Nze, Uche Okelue and one Arinze, were said to have been witnesses to a deal involving the sale of a Varagon Volkswagen bus to a certain businessman by one Chief Warriman Eriengbo.

Eriengbo, who was at the police headquarters, said the

bus was sold for N40,000 on June 13, this year. But the buyer paid N35,000, leaving a balance of N5,000.

He said he had to withhold the ignition key of the bus from the buyer until he had paid up the balance. But when the buyer failed to turn up, he sent his driver, Osaherin and Eghosa to one of the witnesses, Ikechukwu Nze, to collect the balance, having stood surety for the buyer.

To his surprise, Eriengbo said he heard gunshots a while later and then a phone call which alerted him that Eghosa and Osaherin had been killed.

He said he learnt that one of the suspects, Uche, had called in some cult boys from Uwelu area to attack the debt collectors.

He said he first ran to the spot of the incident before go-

ing to the Evbuotubu Police Station to report. There, he met two of the suspects and asked the police to arrest them.

But the suspects, Okelue and Nze denied any knowledge of the killings. They said though there was a clash between the deceased and some people who came to sympathise with them, they did not know the killers.

They alleged that Eriengbo and his boys had been consistently extorting huge sums of money as illicit levies from them for using the place where they traded in scrap metals and used batteries.

The PPRO said the police would charge the suspects with murder and criminal conspiracy. He added that the police had established a relationship between those who came to kill the deceased and the suspects.