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## Two die, one arrested in supermarket robbery

FEBRUARY 16, 2015 BY MUDIAGA AFFE ■ 6 COMMENTS

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**The suspect; recovered items**

| credits: Mudiaga Affe

One armed robbery suspect was on Saturday shot dead after a gun duel with the police during a robbery operation that took place in a supermarket at the Ikot Effa area of Calabar, Cross River State.

Two robbery suspects were also arrested in the process while four others were said to have escaped. One of the arrested suspects, was said to have later died.

PUNCH Metro learnt on Sunday that the police acted on distress calls by the neighbours of the owner of the supermarket.

It was learnt that items recovered from the suspects included a locally-made pistol and 42 rounds of ammunition, machetes, mobile

phones, electronic appliances and other valuables.

Narrating the incident, which occurred at about 8.30am on Ikot Effa Road, the supermarket owner, Mr. Akpan Ekerette, said he had initially thought the gunmen were customers who had come to buy provisions, but was shocked when two of them walked up to him at the counter and demanded all the money in his possession.

He said, "At first I didn't know they were armed robbers because they were about five that came into the store, while others stood outside. Some were also in a red Audi saloon car. One of the suspects, who was eventually killed, hit me on the head with his gun and ordered me to bring money.

"I directed him to my drawer where I had close to N500, 000, including cash from the day's sales. That was when I started screaming and my neighbours alerted the police who came in less than five minutes and the armed robbers started shooting, during the exchange of fire they apprehended two of them while others escaped."

Ekerette said the attack would be the second time in 2015 that armed men would be visiting his supermarket.

"This is the second time they are attacking me this year. If not that the police responded on time I wonder what would have happened to me because apart from the money they took, they were also packing items from my shop including beverages and drinks," he said.

It was learnt from the police that one of the two robbery suspects that were apprehended died at about 12am following injuries from the duel and his corpse had yet to be taken to the mortuary as at the time of filing this report.

Confirming the incident, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Hogan Bassey, said members of the public played critical role in the success of the operation by promptly informing the police while the incident was ongoing.

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Bassey said, "It was the timely tip-off that made it possible for us to get to the scene promptly. If this trend is maintained, the police will definitely rid the state of criminals. These armed robbers are not invincible. Useful information can go a long way in foiling their plans."

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