

## NEWS

# Gunmen kill two Operation Delta Safe policemen, cart away rifles

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## Matthew Ochei, Asaba

Gunmen have killed two policemen attached to ‘*Operation Delta Safe*’ on Ugbolu/Illah Road, in the Oshimili North Local Government Area of Delta State.

The assailants, who injured several other officers, reportedly carted away two service rifles.

*PUNCH Metro* gathered that the incident happened around 8pm on Saturday at a failed portion of the Ugbolu/Illah Road near the Lake Town Hotel.

A source said the hoodlums were armed robbers.

The source, a commercial driver plying the route, lamented that the road had been used by robbers to unleash terror on passengers and drivers, particularly at night.

He said, “My bus was directly behind the vehicle which the armed robbers used. On getting to the police checkpoint, which is just by the bad spot, the robbers opened fire on the policemen, who returned fire; some of the policemen ran into the bush.

“The two police officers were found dead after the shootout. The robbers asked us to reverse and go back that they were only after the policemen. Many passengers, including me, ran into the bush for safety. A police patrol Hilux van and Sienna vehicles later came to the spot.”

Another source in the community said a team of policemen who were returning from Ugbolu after the incident in anger, shot a 75-year-old woman dead.

The source identified the victim as Mrs Okolo, adding that she was killed along Nnebisi Road, Asaba.

“The woman was receiving fresh air in front of her house when she was hit by bullets,” he added.

The state Commissioner of Police, Muhammad Ali, confirmed the two incidents.

He said, “The police also killed two of their men and recovered two pump-action guns and charms from the people, suspected to be IPOB members.

“It was when the police were going after them, in the process of demobilising vehicles suspected to be their own, that bullets hit the old woman, innocently. However, we are still in search of other members with a view to tracking them down and recovering our guns.

“The woman’s body has been deposited in a mortuary and talk with the family is ongoing to see that something is done.”