

Two die, Imo station attacked in police, bandits' shootout

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Commissioner of Police Imo State, CP Abutu Yaro

Bandits on Friday engaged cops in a gun duel at Umuaka in the Njaba Local Government Area of Imo State.

Sources told *Sunday PUNCH* that the bandits reportedly beheaded two cops sent to the Njaba Divisional Police Headquarters and set its barracks on fire.

The police also said that they killed two of the bandits during the encounter.

A community source told our correspondent that residents of the community feared for their safety.

The source said, "Njaba Divisional Police Headquarters, Umuaka, in the Orlu zone of Imo State, was razed down by the gunmen on Friday night, July 30, 2021. Both the police station and residential quarters were completely destroyed, and two police officers reportedly lost their lives in the attack.

"Residents of Umuaka and neighbouring Okwudor were subjected to a long sleepless night of heavy gunshots by the attackers. A lifeless body of a man was found at Okwudor Junction, with his head, hands and legs chopped off."

But a statement by the command's spokesperson, Michael Abattam, noted that the attack on the police station was minimal.

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The statement read, “On July 31, 2021, at about 0120 hours, a convoy of bandits moving towards Njaba town to launch an attack but were intercepted by Operation Restore Peace team of the Nigeria Police , Imo State Command .

“And in the ensuing firefight, one of their operational vehicles was demobilised and two of them neutralised and the remaining ones scampered into the bush. On searching the vehicle, one AK-47 rifle was recovered with 10 rounds of live ammunition and a locally made double-barrelled pistol with two expended cartridges. They detonated an Improvised Explosive Device into the parking lots of a nearby Njaba Police Station, causing minimal damage.

“Meanwhile, cordon and pursuant exercise is ongoing in the area and members of the public residing in the area should not panic as the ongoing police clearance operation is designed to root out violent criminals in that axis and they should avail police information of persons seen treating bullet wounds or hiding within the community be reported to the nearest police station.”