

Nobody died in Imo station attack –Police

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The Imo State police command on Friday said nobody died in an attack on the Isiala Mbano Divisional Police headquarters situated at Umuelemai on Thursday.

This is coming after indigenes said a female police officer was shot dead when the hoodlums struck.

A statement by the command's spokesperson, Michael Abattam, said the police operatives engaged the attackers when they struck and that no arms were lost during the attack even though they damaged a part of the building.

The statement reads, "On October 21 at about 1844 hours, armed bandits suspected to be IPOB/ESN terror group came to Isiala Mbano Police Station in about five vehicles and three motorcycles, threw petrol bombs on the roof of the already damaged building in the #EndSARS imbroglio and started shooting indiscriminately.

"The gallant police operatives attached to the station returned fire, engaging them in a gun duel. They were able to repel the bandits and in the process they zoomed off in their vehicles and motorcycles."

"One of the police operatives who sustained gunshot injury was rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment. Meanwhile, the command's tactical teams have been dispatched to the area in pursuit of the bandits and to beef up security in the area."

He conveyed the appreciation of the state Commissioner of Police, Rabiū Hussaini, to the officers and men of the division and the people of the state for their support, while enjoining them to work in synergy with security agencies to combat crime and protect police stations.

Earlier, a group of hoodlums set ablaze the palace of the traditional ruler of Etekwuru autonomous community in the Ohaji/Egbema Local Government Area of Imo state, Eze Kenneth Okereke.

His sport utility vehicle and properties were not spared as the

attackers supervised the arson. The incident which happened Thursday night was 24 hours after youths and soldiers clashed in the community.

The clash led to the killing of a soldier, and in a reprisal, the enraged military men burnt some houses in the community.

On Thursday night, the attackers stormed the king's palace with explosives and when they could not find the monarch or any member of his family, they set his house and properties, including his official vehicle, on fire.

Confirming the arson to our correspondent, the traumatised traditional ruler said he and his wife were in the house when the hoodlums struck but they narrowly escaped death.

The monarch said he was rescued by police operatives, as he decried reports that he left his palace half naked.

Narrating how it happened in a text message, he said, "At 10.30pm on Thursday, hoodlums came into my compound, broke my window

glasses, poured fuel into my rooms and set my house on fire.

"They were shooting aimlessly and I couldn't find a way of escape with my wife and child. I started making calls to the police for help but help could not come until the building was burnt beyond control. My 4Runner SUV was burnt to ashes."

He said he learnt the attack was carried out by the people responsible for the killing of the soldier. "I left my house with only boxers as all the property in my house got burnt," he added. "As the police arrived, I came out from hiding and discovered that the next building to my house was also on fire.

"I am calling for help from any good spirited person to enable me to survive the shock.

Hoodlums had on Tuesday attacked a stakeholders meeting at the Njaba Local Government Area headquarters located at Nnenasa and killed two monarchs on the spot, while others sustained injuries.