

Ikenna Obianeri, Awka

13 killed in gun attacks

NO fewer than 13 persons including policemen and hoodlums have reportedly lost their lives during attacks by gunmen on police stations on Sunday and Monday in Anambra State.

During the attack on Monday, seven persons including four policemen were killed by the gunmen who attacked the Awada Police Station, near Obosi, in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State.

This attack occurred less than 24 hours after an attack on the 1-2 Police Divisional left no fewer than six persons, including policemen dead in the Oyi Local Government Area of the state on Sunday.

PUNCH Metro gathered that during the attack on Monday, the hoodlums, in their large numbers, stormed the Awada Police Station around 2:18am and engaged the policemen on duty in a fierce battle.

During the operation, it was learnt that the assailants threw petrol bombs into the station, and the fire that arose from the explosion burnt a section of the station, a police patrol vehicle and three exhibit vehicles that were parked on the premises.

Three of the assailants and four policemen were said to have lost their lives during the exchange of gunfire that ensued during the attack which threw residents in the area into a panic.

Speaking with our correspondent, a woman, who does not want



The attacked police station her name mentioned for security reasons, said a senior police officer was part of the policemen that died during the attack.

The woman said, "It was a terrible thing for people living close to Awada Police Station; it was as if war had come to us. Gunshots rent the air and the whole neighbourhood

remained awake for several hours up till this morning.

"It was this morning that we got to know that unknown gunmen invaded the police station, set some parts of the building on fire, and killed three policemen including the DPO, a newly-recruited constable, and one Inspector. They also set a

transformer in the area ablaze.

"But with the help of the military men that surfaced later, the security operatives were able to kill three of the hoodlums after a hot exchange of gunfire. They also apprehended two of them alive while others fled."

The woman explained that two AK-47 guns with the vehicles the

allegedly defiling a 15-year-old girl in the state.

He said the defendant allegedly had sexual intercourse

on Anambra police stations

gang used for the operation were recovered.

The state Commissioner of Police, Echeng Echeng, after an on-the-spot assessment of the crime scene, reportedly ordered the transfer of the suspects to the command headquarters for further investigation.

Confirming the attack, the state Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Tochukwu Ikenga, said the CP also ordered the command's operational/investigative department to track down other fleeing members of the gang.

Ikenga said, "Around 2:20am on Monday, gunmen suspected to be members of the Indigenous People of Biafra and Eastern Security Network attacked the Awada Police Station in Idemili North LGA of Anambra State, using explosive devices and automatic firearms.

"In response to the attack, police operatives attached to the Anambra State Command engaged the assailants jointly with troops from 302 Artillery Regiment of the Nigeria Army, in a gun duel and three members of the outlawed IPOB/ESN were fatally wounded while three Kalashnikov rifles and one automatic pump action gun were recovered from them.

"Other items recovered from the assailants include a brown Lexus

330 with number plate GWA 415BB ABJ, one unregistered KYMCO motorcycle suspected to be stolen properties, charms and other incriminating items."

Ikenga said during a mop-up operation by police/military operatives, two male suspects believed to have participated in the attack were apprehended.

"Regrettably, four police

operatives paid the supreme price while a section of the station, one police patrol vehicle and three exhibit vehicles parked on the premises were set ablaze by petrol bombs thrown into the station by the assailants.

"The CP further appealed to residents of Awada and the good people of Anambra State to remain calm as the police, in collaboration

with sister agencies, will not rest on its oars until the criminal elements tormenting the state are brought to justice," Ikenga added.

PUNCH Metro gathered that the attack on Monday was the 10th in the series of attacks by gunmen on police facilities, and no fewer than 24 persons, including civilians and policemen, had been killed in February 2023.

80-year-old woman dies in Kwara fire

Tunde Oyekola, Ilorin

THE remains of an 80-year-old woman were recovered from a building which was gutted by fire in Ilorin, Kwara State capital on Sunday afternoon.

The fire, according to the Kwara State Fire Service, occurred at 43, Adegbeye Street behind the Federal Secretariat, Fate area, Ilorin in Ilorin East Local Government Area of the state.

It involved a storey building of four flats in which only the first floor of the building was affected where the old woman whose name was yet to be disclosed was residing.

The state fire service which confirmed the incident in a statement signed by its Head of Media and Publicity, Hassan Adekunle, said its men were called to the scene of the incident at about 3pm.

The statement said, "The fire which was reported by one Mr Oni at about 3pm had fire crews in attendance to forestall disaster in the area.

"The cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained while it was however confined to the first floor of the storey building where it originated from. Out of four flats in the storey building, one flat was affected.

"Due to delay in distress call, the raging fire has caused severe damage to the building and a woman of about 80 years old was recovered from the building and suspected dead before the spread of the fire was confined and eventually subdued."

In another fire which occurred earlier in Offa in Offa Local Government Area of the state, a fire outbreak reportedly engulfed a residential building at Olanipekun Hospital, G.R.A, opposite Oyeleke Memorial College, Offa.

The fire outbreak involved a storey building of about 16 bedrooms out of which eight bedrooms were completely razed as a result of a power surge in the area.

The fire service said the total estimated property saved at the incident was valued at about N62.8m while the estimated property lost to the fire was valued at N17.2m.

17 escape death as boat capsizes in Lagos

Dayo Oyewo

boat captain is being interrogated and investigation is ongoing."

Chisland: Whitney's autopsy done police