

Police rescue abducted teenager in Rivers, neutralise suspect

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Police officer

| By Dennis Naku

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The Rivers State Police Command said its men have rescued a 13-year-old girl who was abducted while running an errand for her mother in the Umuebule community in the Etche Local Government Area of the state.

This is, as the police said, one of the suspected kidnappers, identified as Chizoba Andrew Obi, was gunned down when his gang members opened fire on operatives who raided their hideout to retrieve weapons.

The spokesperson of the State Police Command, Grace Iringe-Koko, disclosed this in a statement issued in Port Harcourt on Wednesday.

Iringe-Koko, a Superintendent of Police, said the operative swung into action after the kidnappers contacted the girl's parents to demand a ransom and threatened to kill their victim if they refused to comply.

The statement partly reads, "On June 7, 2025, at about 0930hrs, the Rivers State Police Command received credible intelligence regarding a 13-year-old girl who went missing on June 5, 2025, at about 1530hrs, while running an errand for her mother in Umuebule community, Etche Local Government Area.

"The victim's mother subsequently received ransom demands of two million naira via phone calls threatening that the daughter would be killed if the demand was not met.

"Operatives from the C4i Intelligence unit promptly swung into action, arresting a 24-year-old female suspect from Igbo-Etche, suspected to be the subscriber of the SIM cards linked to the ransom demands.

“The suspect had allegedly claimed that she was robbed and her phone was carted away on June 5, 2025. Further investigation on June 10, 2025, at about 1600hrs culminated in the arrest of the principal suspect, Chizoba Andrew Obi, a 36-year-old male suspect and the kidnapped victim was rescued unhurt in a fenced forest at Umuechem Community, Etche LGA.”

The state police’s image maker said a locally made pistol and a live cartridge were recovered in the kidnappers’ camp.

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She continued, “The suspect confessed to being a serial kidnapping kingpin operating with a four-man gang.

“As the suspect led Police Operatives to the forest to recover their operational weapons, the gang members, on sighting the Police operatives, opened fire, prompting a shootout between the Police and kidnappers.

“The arrested suspect attempted to flee but was caught in the crossfire and was neutralized, sustaining bullet wounds.

“He was rushed to the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital for medical treatment, but was pronounced dead by the Medical Doctor on duty.

“The corpse of the deceased suspect has been deposited at the mortuary for autopsy.”

She said the rescued girl was debriefed and has reunited with her family, saying, “Investigation is ongoing, with efforts underway to apprehend other members of the syndicate and recover their operational weapons.”

Meanwhile, the Commissioner of Police, Olugbenga Adipoju, commended the operatives for their bravery and reaffirmed the command’s commitment to ensuring the safety and security of all citizens in the state.

Adipoju further said that efforts will be sustained to ensure that all perpetrators of crime and criminality in the state face justice.