

Police kill 2 kidnappers, injure another in Aba

From OKEY
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Policemen in Aba, the Abia State commercial capital on Tuesday shot dead two members of a kidnap gang, who had allegedly been terrorizing residents of the city and its environs.

The leader of the gang identified as Onyebuchi (surname withheld) escaped with gunshot wounds.

The shot suspects, Chukwudi, described as a motor mechanic and Chidiadi were said to be members of a 12-man gang that about three weeks ago, abducted a journalist working with the Nigerian Television Authority (Aba) and a businessman residing at Faulks road in the commercial city.

Briefing newsmen, the

Assistant Commissioner of Police in charge of Aba Area Command, Rabiun Dayi, said his men intercepted some members of the gang at a mechanic workshop along Aba-Owerri road in Aba. Dayi said one of his men went to the mechanic workshop to repair his vehicle and suspecting movements in the workshop, reported to the office and policemen stormed the area and made some arrests.

He said that during the arrest, it was discovered that some of the men at the workshop including its owner, were kidnappers and subsequent investigations revealed they were involved in high-calibre kidnapping.

"One of our policemen was at the mechanic workshop to repair his vehicle

and suspected a movement. "He made a formal report to the office, which led to police storming the area and arrested seven suspected kidnappers including the owner of the mechanic workshop."

He said the arrest also led to the arrest of the other suspects, one of them also confessed his involvement in the kidnap of a prominent businessman in Aba and that he used his N1.4million share of the ransom paid to buy a Passat CL car. The Police area commander said that as the suspects were being taken to their hideout at Mgboko in Obingwa Local Government Area, their gang members attacked the police van and the police returned fire. In the ensuing gun duel, the two suspected kidnappers were killed while some policemen sus-

tained injuries.

"They have their hideout at a forest at Mgboko village. When we stormed there, they started firing and even shattered our operational vehicle. Some of our men sustained injuries while two of their members died and others escaped with bullet wounds.

"We are calling on Aba residents to report anyone with bullet wounds. They must be vigilant and report suspected movements to the police as the ember months are here."

Some of the items recovered from the hideout included a cartridge with 39 rounds of live ammunition and N285, 000 with which they were said to have planned to use to buy more ammunition for another operation, which was billed later this week.