

kidnappers' prime, throw victim into river alive

■ They collected N750,000 through his ATM before drowning him



Achonye

BY NGOZI UWUJARE

Operatives of the Special Anti-Kidnapping Squad, Rivers State police command, has arrested one of the most wanted kidnappers, Godspower Ekpe, 24, whose recent case was the abduction of one Ernest Achonye at Elekahia in Port Harcourt, the state capital.

The suspect, Ekpe and a five-man gang, threw Achonye alive into a river at Ekoro after they had withdrawn N750,000 from his account through the ATM. The other gang members arrested over the incident were Legborsi Piagbo, Christopher Chukwudebe, Godwin Baza and George Onyekwere.

On the outcome of investigation, the state Commissioner of Police, Mr Musa Kimo told *Saturday Sun* that the suspect and his gang lured the late Achonye with the excuse that they wanted him to be in charge of a developmental project in Ogoni community.

On September 9, the late Achonye drove his Jeep in the company of Ekpe for a site inspection. Ekpe arranged for his gang men to lay ambush at a lonely path close

to Ogoni.

"As soon as they kidnapped him, they forced him to divulge the password of his various ATM cards found with him. As soon as they withdrew the daily limit, the gang tied him up and threw him into the Ekoro river, in Port Harcourt."

CP Kimo further explained that as soon as the dead body of Achonye was recovered, detectives led by Supol Edward Shadrack initially arrested one of the gang members named Godwin Gaza who works as a security man in one of the banks where the money was hurriedly withdrawn. "We also recovered the Jeep of the late Achonye on October 15, 2015 which had been sold to one Emmanuel Ede for N600,000. Gradually, Ekpe and his gang members were tracked down and arrested."

The prime suspect and the suspected leader of the gang, confessed that it was greed that led him into crime. "I am a bricklayer and used to work for oga Achonye in most of his construction sites. Although, he had been assisting me financially, he was not doing enough for me. I thought of a good way to collect money from him. I convinced him as a contractor that my community had a major project and that I recom-

"On the agreed date, we drove to my village in his jeep. As expected, my boys blocked us and picked him while I pretended that I was worried about him. We took him to the house of one of my boys in the Daburo area of Port Harcourt."

As soon as they picked the late Achonye, they thought of the best way to collect their ransom without calling anyone. "We initially requested ransom from him and he bragged that we will never get a kobo. We tortured him till he gave us the password of his ATM cards. We also forced him to transfer N750,000 electronically to the account of one of my boys. Since he had seen my face, it was risky to release him. I did not want to shoot him, so I thought of the easiest way to get rid of him. I tied his hands and feet and threw him into Ekoro river."

"We generated a fake customs paper and sold the car to one Mr Emmanuel. I am not as bad as the police thinks. The other major crime I committed was when I kidnapped my client who refused to pay me for a work that I did. I kidnapped him, collected my money and threw him into a soakaway. Luckily, he was rescued alive and the man does not want trouble, so he forgave me and withdrew the case from court."



CP Kimo

mended him to our elders as the best man for the job. I deceived the deceased that my community in Ogoni has some projects to execute. We agreed on a day that we will visit the site while I made arrangements with some of my boys to ambush us."