

Police kill one in gun duel, arrest suspected kidnapper in Benue

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From **Scholastica Onyeka**, Makurdi

Benue State Police Command said it has clamped down on hoodlums trying to truncate efforts of the command to maintain peace and order in the state.

Commissioner of Police in Benue State, Mr Okoro Alawari Julius, in a statement, signed by the Police Public Relations Officer, (PPRO), SP Catherine Anene, said the command neutralised an armed robbery gang, killed one of them while others escaped with gunshot injuries.

He explained that on May 3, when men of Operation Zenda JTF were on routine patrol along Taraku – Otukpo road, they ran into an armed robbery incident at Ankyoor village.

“The syndicates engaged the police team in a gun duel and consequently, one of the robbers received gunshot injuries and was rushed to the hospital where he was confirmed dead and corpse deposited in the hospital morgue while other gang members escaped with gunshot injuries.”

According to the statement, items received from the suspects include one locally made pistol loaded with three rounds of 9mm live ammunition and dried leaves suspected to be Indian hemp.

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He said investigation was on-going to arrest suspects still at large.

The Commissioner also said the command had arrested one Elijah Elisha, a suspected kidnapper, for threatening a resident with kidnap and death.

He said: “On April 19 2023, information was received that a kidnapper was threatening Mr Innocent of Zaki-Biam town in Ukum Local Government Area, to pay the sum of N5 million to an account, failing which he would be kidnapped and killed.

The victim paid the sum of N500,000 to the said account provided by the kidnapper but the threat persisted.

Elisha was however arrested following police investigation and a police uniform and military camouflage trousers were recovered from him during a search in his house.

The suspect has also confessed to the crime.