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THIS DAY

Nigeria: Seven Killed As Robbers Unleash Terror On Uyo

Okon Bassey

3 December 2010

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Uyo — Wednesday was a bloody day in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State capital, as seven persons were killed in the metropolis in an encounter between unidentified gang of armed bandits and the police.

THISDAY gathered that an Inspector of Police, three civilians and three hoodlums were killed at two separate locations in the state capital while a mobile policeman and a soldier were left in critical conditions during gun duels.

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Eyewitnesses said the incident occurred at about 7.30pm, disclosing that the dead police officer and two security operatives now injured were attacked at a road block along Oron road while the hoodlums and three of the civilians were killed closed to C' Division of the Nigeria Police along Aka-Etinan road just few poles from the State Police Headquarters.

Unconfirmed report alleged that the gunmen that stormed the state in two vehicles, Benz 190 and Kia, were on a mission to free their members detained at the State Police headquarters, Ikot Akpan-Abia but were stampeded by security operatives who engaged them in gun battle for more than two hours.

THISDAY checks revealed that the sporadic shooting caused stir and pandemonium in Uyo metropolis as residents scampered for safety.

State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Sani Magaji, who confirmed the report yesterday said the gang was a group of hoodlums who had been terrorising the state, stressing that the police were able to repel them.

The Police Commissioner, who assumed office in the state about two weeks ago however said he suspected the hoodlums were in the state to rob banks, explaining that the civilians, a lady and two others were killed by stray-bullets during cross fire between the police and the bandits.

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"In the shoot-out that ensured, three of the hoodlums were gunned down while others escaped with serious bullet wounds. A policeman was shot while three passer-by were hit by stray bullet in the crossfire", Magaji declared.

Parading corpses of the robbers at the Police headquarters, the Police Commissioner said two of the vehicles used by the hoodlums and more than 800 rounds of live ammunitions have been recovered from them.

Also, yesterday, the Commissioner paraded 10 suspected kidnappers and armed robbers some based in Port Harcourt.

Magaji assured members of the public of the command's irrevocable determination to rid the state of criminal elements and not to hesitate to report to the operatives suspected criminals in the area.

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