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Police Foil Attempt To Kidnap Obi Of Onitsha

Okodili Ndidi, Onitsha - 03.10.2009

AS the spate of kidnapping continues to bedevil the nooks and crannies of the nation, the Anambra Police Command on Thursday night foiled an attempt by kidnappers to abduct the Anambra State chairman of traditional rulers and the Obi of Onitsha, Igwe Alfred Nnaemeka Achebe.

This was coming as the monarch is preparing for his eighth Ofala festival. The suspected kidnappers, numbering over 10, who came with a Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV) and a Mercedes Benz, were, according to eye witnesses, dislodged by the men of the Special Anti Robbery Squad, (SARS) attached to the Onitsha Area Command between 8.00 p.m. and 9.00 p.m. at his residence in Onitsha.

After a gun duel with the hoodlums, the police overpowered them, killing two of the suspected kidnappers in the process and recovering some arms and ammunition including a rocket launcher, five AK 49 rifles, 53 loaded magazines, 14 expended magazines, one grenade and one bag containing clothes from the kidnappers.

"Unfortunately, in the shootout between the police and the kidnappers, a woman was killed by stray bullets. Her body has been deposited at the Onitsha General Hospital's mortuary, while four other casualties, who were hit by bullets, are receiving treatment at the same hospital," disclosed the eyewitness.

When contacted, the Onitsha Police Area Commander, Mr. John Nwele, who confirmed the incident to newsmen, said the police recovered the vehicles used by the kidnappers.

Also, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) in the state, Mr. Emeka Chukwuemeka, confirmed the incident, adding that the abductors started their operation at Neni, in Aniocha Local Government Area down to Onitsha between 7.00 p.m. and 10.00 p.m.