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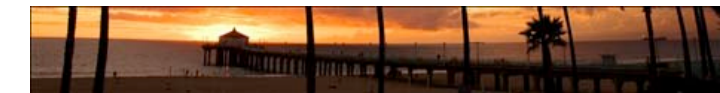
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## VANGUARD

## Nigeria: Soldiers Crack Four Man Kidnap Gang

Tony Edike

25 June 2010

Enugu — SOLDIERS attached to the 82 Division of the Nigerian Army, Enugu, have smashed a four-man kidnap gang believed to be responsible for several cases of ransom kidnapping within Enugu and Ebonyi states in recent time.

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The gang had, Tuesday, kidnapped two persons, including the younger brother of the Secretary to Enugu State Government, Mr. Princewill Iloh, and an engineer identified as Emejulu, at two separate locations in Enugu.

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The kidnappers took them to their hide-out at Uburu Community in Ohaozara Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

## Offensive

However, a crack team of soldiers stormed their hideout following a tip-off, Wednesday, and in a gun duel with members of the gang, killed two, arrested two others and rescued the two victims.

Items recovered from the house believed to have been a major hideout where they detained persons kidnapped from different parts of the South-East included 730 rounds of ammunition, 51 magazines, three AK47 rifles and one pump action rifle.

General Officer Commanding, GOC, 82 Division of the Nigerian Army, Enugu, Maj.-Gen. Mohammed Isah, paraded the arrested kidnappers, who identified themselves as Chukwudi Onu and Sunday Okafor, yesterday.

He revealed that his division had smashed a syndicate of arms dealers who have been supplying arms and ammunition to dealers at Ariaria Market in Abia State.

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The GOC admitted that the situation of insecurity in the South-East has become worrisome but quickly pointed out that "it shall be well" and that all efforts will be made to continue to battle the situation head-on.

## Kidnapper's confessions

One of the arrested kidnappers, Okafor, who sustained bullet injuries during the encounter with soldiers, had been admitted in the military hospital at the headquarters of the Division from where he told reporters, yesterday, that he was invited by one of his friends to come and guard the kidnap victim for a fee that was not specified.

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He explained that he was a trader at Ogbete Main Market, Enugu, where he sold clothes, adding that his friend who invited him into the criminal act was killed during the rescue operation. The suspect, who said he hailed from Abia State, was shot in the

arm and leg.

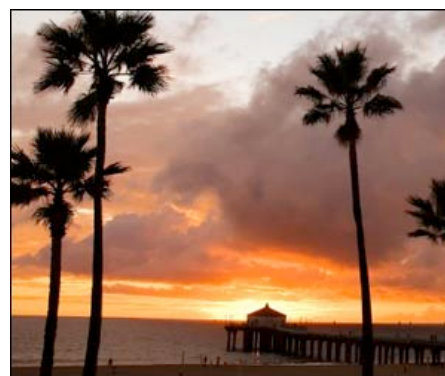
## Victim's story

The rescued engineer, while narrating his ordeal, said on Tuesday, two armed men had taken him away from his house in Enugu, blindfolded.

Emejulu said the hoodlums demanded a ransom of N50 million ransom, but

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that when he was not forthcoming in the negotiation, they tied his hands and legs.

He thanked the soldiers for their quick intervention which led to their rescue.

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