Vanguard



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BREAKING NEWS

TRANSLATE:::

One killed, two injured as hunters shoot vigilantes in error

on August 08, 2013 / in News 7:16 am / Comments

LOKOJA—It was a case of the hunter being hunted in Yagba West Local Government Area, Kogi State, Monday, as one of two sets of vigilante groups deployed to a crime zone fell to the bullets of another who mistook their colleagues for robbers, leaving one dead and two others badly wounded.

Eye witness accounts of the tragedy which occurred between Okunran and Okoloke communities were unanimous that the incident followed a tip-off that highway robbers were operating along Egbe-Pategi federal road, dispossessing travellers of valuables.

Following the tip-off, it was gathered that a distress call from the local vigilantes in Okoloke was made to the local government council, which responded by mobilizing more vigilantes from neighbouring Odo-Ere, the council headquarters and Egbe, the commercial nerve centre of the council, for reinforcement.

A team of vigilantes, numbering 12, immediately reported to the police divisional office at Odo-Ere before embarking on the rescue mission.

Confirming the incident, Media Assistant to Governor Idris Wada on Research and Documentation, Mr Ralph Agbana, who hails from the council, told newsmen that as part of their strategies, the local government vigilantes, on arrival at the scene, decided to split into two groups of six preparatory to engaging the robbers.

He said: "On their way, they met a car driven by one of the victims of the robbers who narrated his ordeal to them, confirming that the men of the underworld were still operating.

A group of vigilantes then entered the car towards the scene. But as soon as the robbers sighted the car they had robbed, they took to their heels.

The vigilantes came down and fired at the robbers but their efforts were too late as they all disappeared into the bushes.

As the vigilantes re-strategized to ambush the robbers, another set of six hunters from Okoloke, joining forces with the vigilantes to dislodge the robbers but who claimed ignorance of the deployment of vigilantes from the local government, opened fire on the local government vigilantes who were caught off-guard.

One of the victims, whose name was given as Abayomi Sunday, was said to have died instantly from bullets that hit him on the head.

Two of his colleagues, whose names were given as Bamidele Olayemi and Dele Asebiobirin, however, survived with bullet wounds on their leg and thigh and are said to be responding to treatment at the ECWA Hospital, Egbe.

Vice chairman of the council, Hon Omoniyi Adeyemi, also confirmed the incident, saying five of the unregistered hunters who allegedly opened fire on the vigilantes have been arrested and are being detained at the Divisional Police Office, Odo-Ere, while a sixth suspect was still at large.

The council chief further disclosed that although the shooters were identified as hunters who claimed to have joined in the onslaught against the robbers as volunteers, they were not members of the official vigilante group recognized by the council authorities.

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