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Police offensive in Benue records huge success

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By PETER DURU, Makurdi

It seems there is no hiding place for perpetrators of crime and criminality in any part of Benue State anymore, not with the renewed vigour the state police command had in the last six months, declared a total onslaught on all forms of crime in the state. The offensive which had recorded huge successes in recent time, also accounted for the recent arrest of two suspected armed men with a large cache of arms.

The armed men who were alleged to have in recent time been terrorizing Kwande, Vandeikya and Ushongo local government areas of the state were nabbed following a tip off. Parading the suspects at the Command headquarters in Makurdi, the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Adams Audu said the gang was arrested at their operational base and hideout at Tsemke village, Vandeikya while preparing for an operation.



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*The suspects with their arms

He disclosed that the gang had been responsible for grave robbery and killings in that area of the state, adding that three members of the gang however, escaped during an exchange of gunfire with his men. Audu said, “today (last Wednesday) at about 11:30 hours, a team of Police Patrol Officers while on duty at Vandeikya received a distress call that a gang of armed robbers was in their hide out at Tsemke village preparing to strike their victims.

“The patrol officers stormed the area, and on arriving at the scene, they were greeted with a heavy gunfire by the suspected armed men, and during the exchange of gunfire, Messrs Terkimbi Msuega and Aondohemba Tyo were arrested while three others escaped. My men also recovered from the gang, one AK-47 rifle with 30 rounds of live ammunition; one FMC rifle with 18 rounds of live ammunition.

“Also recovered were one pump action rifle with seven rounds of live cartridges; 12 empty shells of expended ammunition, five extra magazines with 150 rounds of live ammunition and one blue Volkswagen Sharon bus with registration number Benue, WNN 59 XA.”

The Commissioner of Police also sued for the co-operation of members of the public to enable his command achieve its set targets. While hinting that his men were on the trail of the other three fleeing suspects, Mr. Audu called for vigilance and urged the people of the state to avail the police of information that would lead to their arrest.

According to the Commissioner, a three-man gang that allegedly kidnapped and repeatedly raped a 15-year-old girl in Makurdi and a two-man robbery gang that allegedly specialises in dispossessing their victims of their Ipads and computers were also arrested. “The Police was alerted by an informant who disclosed that his 15-year-old cousin was last Friday repeatedly raped by a four-man gang who had kidnapped her at about 7:30pm.

“Then few days ago, the gang abducted their victim into a red Toyota Camry and drove her to Apir, in the outskirts of Makurdi town, where they took turns to have sexual intercourse with the teenage girl against her consent. Acting on the information, our men swung into action and three of the suspects were apprehended while the Police is still on the trail of the fourth suspect.”

The Police boss further disclosed that officers of the command who were on a stop-and-search duty, arrested two robbery suspects, consequent upon a robbery alarm that was raised by one Philip Abdul who was robbed and pushed out of a moving Toyota Camry car with registration number: AV 566 MKD. Consequently, Emmanuel Omale and Ahmed Deedat were arrested near the Police Secondary School in Demekpe area of Makurdi town in possession of one locally made pistols.”

The Benue State Police boss also disclosed that at the early hours of Sunday, his men gunned down three robbery suspects who reportedly robbed and raped their victims at Mbakihir village in Buruku Local Government area of the state. According to him, “at about 1am, the Police was alerted that robbers numbering about five had invaded the home of their victim (names withheld) at Mbakihir village in Buruku Local Government area.

“The robbers who were said to be robbing the occupants of the said house; also went as far as raping the helpless female children of their victims. Acting to the information, our men on patrol within the area immediately got to the scene and were greeted by gunfire from the armed suspects.

The ensuing exchange of gunfire led to three of the suspects sustaining bullet wounds and were subsequently arrested but while being conveyed to a nearby hospital, they died before they could be given medical attention.

”However, two members of the gang escaped arrest with bullet wounds, but we are on their trail, and I believe strongly that they would soon be arrested.

Some of the items that were recovered from the gang include: three assorted locally-made guns and four live ammunition, two axes, three live cartridges and one expended cartridge. I’m by this information, soliciting the co-operation of members of the public in giving us information that would lead to the arrest of the fleeing suspected armed robbers and other criminal elements in Benue State.”

The Police Commissioner stated that all the suspects would be prosecuted by the police upon completion of investigations into their respective cases.

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