

Metro

When NSDCD-Police face-off almost foiled arrest of petroleum vandals

BY BOSE ADELAJA

AN alleged attempt by some police men to prevent operatives of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps, NSCDC, Lagos State Command, from arresting five suspected oil pipeline vandals almost resulted into a bloody fracas. That was on Friday August 22, 2014 when its Director General, Dr. Ade Abolurin, led his Anti-vandals Squad to Owutu area of Ikorodu, Lagos.

They came in response to the reported incidents of vandalism in the area which has put the entire community in fear. Residents were said to have taken various steps in the past to curtail such activities without much effect.

The team which was constituted by the Office of the Attorney General of the Federation with Dr Abolurin as Chairman, has been on assessment tour of the country and to dispose forfeited items used for vandalism of critical infrastructure. But no sooner had the men arrived the community than five vandals were caught in the act. They were caught on the water with two big Cotonou boats and several jerry cans containing petroleum products and were im-



Operatives of the NSCDC Anti-Vandals Squad during an operation. INSET: An operative battered during an encounter with police men

lice and that other law enforcement agencies are permitted to operate in the area for any

to various quarters, but, to our astonishment, they come here to parley with the vandals and nobody hears anything again," he alleged.

During VM's visit to Isawo Division, she was referred to the State Police Public Relations Officer, but a senior police officer who pleaded anonymity said investigations were ongoing.

Meanwhile, the National Public Relations Officer for NSCDC, Okeh Emmanuel, has reiterated the Corp's mandate to fight oil theft, illegal bunkering and vandalism of public infrastructure. He added that it is intensifying efforts to partner with all and sundry in order to win the war. Okeh also said government has stepped into the matter for fur-

ther investigations.

In March 2013, two members of NSCDC were sent to their early graves when a patrol team of the Anti-vandals Squad was allegedly ambushed by policemen from Isawo division. This is beside the reported killing of two operatives of the squad, Gabriel Adaji and Innocent Akegbe, who were felled by police bullets in 2013.

The inspector was alleged to have ordered his men to prevent the NSCDC team from carrying on with its mission

mediately arrested by the squad.

purpose. In spite of this, the squad refused to set free the five suspects who are present-

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