

GUNFIRE IN ANAMBRA, KOGI

Boko Haram invades DSS office, kidnappers attack police

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group, were killed in Kogi.

Both incidents happened on Friday night.

Seven suspects arrested in connection with the Anambra shootout were paraded by the police, yesterday. The incident occurred at Obosi in Idemili South Local Government Area where the police and kidnappers exchanged gunfire.

While parading the arrested suspects, yesterday, Anambra State Police Command Public Relations Officer, Mr. Ali Okechukwu, said an L-300 Mitsubishi bus, one rifle, 15 rounds of ammunition, 85 rounds of live cartridges and 750 AK-47 ammunition were recovered.

Okechukwu said the suspects were linked to the kidnapping of an expatriate, who worked for Pastor Chris Oyakhilome of the Christ Embassy Church in Kano, and came to Anambra State to pick their ransom.

The police, the PRO said, had trailed the gang for a long time, adding that, when the suspects noticed that the police were on their trail, they fired from their L-300 bus at Obosi and the police had to return fire.

He identified one of the dead suspects as Okechukwu Ilu while the

identities of the two others were unknown.

The Kogi incident, which allegedly claimed the lives of a Mobile Policeman and three attackers, was said to have been launched around 10 pm, on Friday, when the gunmen, believed to be members of Boko Haram, stormed the headquarters of the Department of State Services (DSS) in Lokoja, the state capital. Seven persons were injured.

On arrival, the heavily armed invaders attacked security agents around with IEDs and AK47 rifles, among other dangerous weapons, in order to gain access into the headquarters.

A DSS top official immediately put a distress call to nearby police and army units which deployed truck loads of officers and men and arrived about 40 minutes later but could not gain access to the area as the attackers had deflated the tyres of a truck used in blocking the road at the Zone 8 Junction leading to the DSS office.

Sunday Vanguard learnt that the police and army teams engaged the attackers for three hours before the suspected Boko Haram insurgents were subdued after which some of the suspects fled into the bush while three lay dead. A police officer was also killed.

Kogi State Police Public

Relations Officer, Williams Aya, who confirmed the incident, said, "It was criminal elements that invaded the DSS office around 9:45 pm on Friday, but prompt response of the police led to the death of three of the attackers but, at the end, the command lost a policeman."

Aya said the command was investigating the attack, noting that he could not confirm whether the attackers gained access to the DSS office. "We are still investigating and cannot say much until we are able to lay our hands on the suspects. We are working with other security agents in the state to ensure that we get to the root cause of the attack", he said.

WHO removes Nigeria from polio-endemic list

BY FUNMIAJUMOBI
reporting from UN headquarters, New York

The World Health Organization (WHO) announced, yesterday, that polio is no longer endemic in Nigeria. This is the first time Nigeria has interrupted the transmission of wild poliovirus, bringing the country and the African region closer to being certified polio-free. The Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), the public-private

partnership leading the effort to eradicate polio, called this a 'historic achievement' in global health.

According to this report, announced at a meeting of GPEI in New York, Nigeria has not reported a case of wild poliovirus since 24 July 2014, and all laboratory data confirmed 12 months had passed without any new cases despite the fact that, in 2012, Nigeria accounted for more than half of all polio cases worldwide.

Dr Margaret Chan, Director-General, WHO, said the outstanding

commitment and efforts that got Nigeria off the endemic list must continue, to keep Africa polio-free and asked that all must now support the efforts in Pakistan and Afghanistan so they soon join the polio-free world.

Dr Ado Muhammad, Executive Director, National Primary Health Care Development Agency, Nigeria, said Nigerians were proud because, with local innovation and national persistence, polio had been beaten and affirmed that vigilance and efforts will continue in order to keep Nigeria polio-free.