

How we killed three policemen, civilian before snatching their rifles — Suspects

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In November 2018, operatives of the Inspector General of Police Special Intelligence, Response Team, IRT, didn't know that they were on the verge of unmasking killers of three policemen and a civilian who were murdered in cold blood by gunmen, at Woji area of Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, when they apprehended two members of a notorious robbery gang who specialized in snatching Toyota Sienna vans and robbing super markets across the Garden City.



•Suspects

Vanguard gathered that the policemen and the civilian lost their lives while providing security for a top Management Staff of Total Nigeria Plc, who paid a courtesy visit to the company's office in Port Harcourt in September 2018 and their convoy was ambushed by the gunmen when the pilot vehicle missed its way and veered into Woji area of Portharcourt, through Ada-George in a bid to turn back.

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Police sources disclosed that the civilian killed during the attack was later identified as a driver to the pilot vehicle, while the Ak-47 rifles in possession of the policemen were all carted away by the gunmen after the attack.

The former Inspector General of Police, Ibrahim Idris, had given the police in Rivers State marching orders to apprehend the gunmen who carried out the killing. The police in Portharcourt had thought it was an attempt to kidnap the Total top management staff and they launched a man-hut for members of the supposed kidnap gang.

But the arrest of two suspects who specialized in robbing Toyota Sienna vans and super markets across the state gave a new twist to the case as the suspects confessed to have been responsible for the killing of the three policemen and their driver.

The suspects were said to have been on a random robbery of super markets along, Ada-George and Woji areas of Port Harcourt, dispossessing customers of their valuables and mobile phones, when they accosted the pilot vehicle conveying the policemen. Sources said the suspects who were also armed with Ak-47 rifles opened fire on the policemen and the driver killing them on the spot.

A source at the IRT explained to Vanguard that the operatives, following directive from the former Inspector General of Police, were trailing kidnappers of British-Nigeria national, Professor Mrs. Belgaum, who was abducted and released after an unknown amount was paid as ransom before they busted the car snatching and armed robbery gang.

The source who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said; “we were trailing kidnappers of Professor Belgaum, a British Nigerian, who is equally a medical doctor working at the University of Port-Harcourt Teaching Hospital, UPTH, when we stumbled on these suspects.

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We learned that the people who kidnapped the professor carried out the operation with a black Toyota Sienna and we contacted our informants within Port-Harcourt who gave us the identities of the suspects, Dumlebabari Mbane and Godswill Jackson, who they said specialized in robbing Toyota Sienna vans within Rivers State. We went after them and got them arrested, but they confessed during interrogations that they were not part of the gang who kidnapped Professor Belgaum, but they admitted to have taken part in the killing of three policemen and their driver at Woji area of the state. They led us to recover two Toyota Sienna vans which they

robbed from residents of Port Harcourt and two of the Ak-47rifles they took from the policemen they killed”.

When Vanguard interviewed Dumlebabari Mbane, a native of Ogoni, in Rivers State, he narrated how he joined the gang and how members of his gang killed the policeman and made away with their rifles. He said; “I am an electrician and a bus conductor.

I was looking for money to open a shop but I joined the robbery gang because I couldn't get a job. Smart is the leader of our gang and he was my class mate at community Primary school, Khana Local Government, Area of Rivers State.. I met him when I went to Port Harcourt to look for job. When he said I should follow him for a robbery operation I agreed and we robbed a super market in June 2018. Smart was the person carrying the gun, we were four persons who went for the robbery in Ajip area of Port Harcourt.

I stole cans of milk and tea from the shop but I don't know the amount that was robbed from the shop. I was given N48,000 as my share and I went to my village with the money. I spent one month in the village and when I came back to Port Harcourt, I pretended as if nothing had happened and I went back to my bus conductor job. I later met one Godswill Monday, who was a driver and I linked him with Smart. We went and snatched a vehicle with the gun and Godswill drove the vehicle. We then took it to rob a super market at Ada George area of Port Harcourt. After the operation, I was given N120,000 with five phones. Smart was the person that brought the guns. The last job we went for was at Woji area of Port Harcourt.

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Four of us went for that job, we snatched a Sienna and used it to rob the first super market in Ada George and looted the shop. I can't say the exact amount we got from that shop before we moved to the next shop at Woji which we robbed, took all the cash and other valuables to Elechi where we shared all our loot.

On that last operation, we attacked some policemen we accosted on the road in Woji area and killed them. Smart and Ibinabo took the rifles of the policemen and I was given one of the rifles”, he narrated.

But Godswill Jackson, 22, a native of Akwa Ibom State, blamed his friend Mbane for luring him into crime. He lamented that; “I am a commercial bus driver, and I earn N4000 daily. My friend, Mbane introduced me into armed robbery when my bus got spoilt and I told my friend Mbane about it because he was always spending money. He told me that he was looking for a driver. On the first operation it was Mbane and I

that went for it and snatched a Sienna bus at mile 3. The owner of the vehicle was supplying bread with the vehicle and we drove to Chuba area where we robbed a super market.

He was the only person that entered into the shop and I was given N20,000 and two phones. He also gave me the vehicle and asked me to dispose it. I gave the vehicle to one of my friends to look for a buyer. Two weeks later we went for another operation and he linked me up with his friends and we snatched a Sienna at Mile 2 in Portharcourt and used it to rob a super market, we also robbed another super market.

I was given 2 sachets of water without food—Kidnap victim

On our way back, Smart ordered me to stop and they started running after a vehicle. I heard gun shots but I don't know that policemen were killed on that day. It was when they came back with some additional rifles that I learned that they killed some policemen and snatched their rifles. I had no intention of going into crime, but my friend led me into it".

