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**METRO**

## Gunmen kill 2 policemen in Imo

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**...As hoodlums set ablaze Ezza North LGA hqtrs in Ebonyi**

**By Peter Okutu, Chinonso Alozie & Emmanuel Iheaka, OWERRI**

Two police officers were reportedly shot by gunmen along Akokwa/Arondiizogu/Ikpeora/Okigwe road in Imo State, just as a section of Ezza North Local Government Area headquarters, Ebonyi State

was, yesterday, set ablaze by suspected hoodlums.

It was gathered, yesterday, that the police officers were on a stop-and-search operation when the gunmen stormed the area and opened fire on them.

An eyewitness disclosed that the gunmen were in military uniforms in Siena and Hilux vehicles with security sirens.

“The gunmen came in military uniform and Hilux van and opened fire on the policemen. The policemen were on a stop-and-search operation in the area. I think two of them were killed and some others injured,” the source said.

The eyewitness noted that the gunmen trailed the security vehicle thinking they had loaded the vehicle with cash and were in search of guns.

“They shot them and started searching their vehicle and when they did not see anything they drove away. They thought they have money but nothing in the vehicle. They collected some guns from them and drove away,” he said.

However, pictures from the scene had shown two security officers lying on the ground helplessly. One on the driver’s side and the other on the passenger side.

Still, at the weekend, gunmen allegedly terrorising the area had launched an operation within Umunna in Okigwe road. There were reports of a gun battle between the security officers and hoodlums.

The Imo State Police Command Public Relations Officer, Michael Abbatam, said: “The officers attacked on the Arondiuzugo road were on the transient.”

Hoodlums set ablaze Ezza North LGA hqtrs in Ebonyi

Meanwhile, a section of Ezza North Local Government Area headquarters, Ebonyi State was, yesterday, set ablaze by suspected hoodlums.

Vanguard's investigation revealed that valuable items and documents worth millions of naira were destroyed following the incident.

Chairman of the council, Ogodu Nomeh, who confirmed the incident, said the arsonists numbering over 20 stormed the area around 1 am and proceeded to set ablaze the store of the local government headquarters.

He said the arsonists were, however, resisted by the policemen, who succeeded in inflicting bullet wounds on some of them before they made their escape.

“The fire destroyed new air conditioners bought for the renovation of the council, some documents, a generating set and some furniture,” he said.

Nomeh said the community vigilante apparatus and security agencies are on the trail of the wounded arsonists.

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