



1<sup>st</sup> March 2024

### **Police arrest nine suspects for demanding 10k in Savo Island for unknown reason**

Police have arrested nine suspects for demanding ten thousand dollars from the Bazo community in Savo Island last week for unknown reason.

The arrest came about after the nine suspects from a village in Malaita province led by a pastor went over to Savo and demanded compensation.

The Boza community were not happy with their pastor for the past years who has been benefiting from their Honourable Member of Parliament (MP).

Recently the honourable member called the pastor and gave him some amount of dollars purposely for his community but he did not share it with them.

The Boza community was not happy and told the pastor and his wife to leave the community, claiming that since he (pastor) married their sister he was so dominant over the family and the community and they did not benefit from him and the MP.

The pastor and his wife left the Boza community to Honiara and later he sent back his wife to collect some Church properties. This is where the community told the wife to leave the church properties so that they can be used for church programs.

The pastor was disappointed, teamed up with another eight people and went to Savo and threatened and demanded ten thousand dollars.

Provincial Police Commander (PPC) Central Province, Superintendent David Soakai said, "It was alleged that upon the arrival of the nine men, they assaulted a victim in the presence of his wife and children."

PPC Soakai said, "One of the suspects struck the axe towards the victim but luckily he escaped and ran for his life. Another suspect also used a homemade pistol and threatened one of the victims during the incident."

Superintendent Soakai said, "The group of men were armed with objects, axes and knives. They shouted and used abusive words in the community while searching for the victim after he escaped for his life."

"After their search for the victim failed, they returned to his residence, chased his family, damaged their dwelling house and other household items worth 10 thousand dollars plus," PPC Soakai said.

Mr. Soakai said, "The son of the victim was injured and an elderly female in the community was scared trying to escape and fell helplessly as the drama continued on. The suspects also set fire to a kitchen belonging to the victim but luckily some of the villagers helped to put off the fire."

A joint investigation between Tulagi police and National Criminal Investigation Department of the RSIPF are still ongoing into this incident.

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**Media inquiries**

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The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) was established in 1954. Its mission is 'To provide a safe and peaceful Solomon Islands by strengthening relationships with the community'. The RSIPF strive to provide efficient and effective policing services for the Solomon Islands and expect RSIPF officers to adhere to the RSIPF values.

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