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IMO GOV'S CABINET LIST FAULTED -NEWS
IS THAT THE FIRST SIGN THAT THE STATE IS IN FOR A VERY SMOOTH RIDE?

8 killed in bank robberyLUKKEY ABAWURU, *Lagos* and JOHN SKIKLAM, *Kaduna*

ARE devil armed robbers yesterday struck in separate banks in Lagos and Kaduna killing no fewer than eight persons, and wounding several others.

In Lagos, the robbers numbering about 16 killed one policeman attached to a first generation bank (names withheld) in Ijeshatedo Surulere.

As at press time, the identities of the deceased and the injured could not be ascertained but a reliable source said that one of the victims was a security man guarding the bank.

In Kaduna, about eight bandits stormed another first generation bank (name withheld) opposite Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) killing seven people and carting away undisclosed amount of money.

Eye witness said the operation which took place at about 11:00am lasted for about 30 minutes and it claimed the lives of a policeman attached to the bank, the manager of Daula Resturant, located opposite the University, a girl and two children.

According to the eye witness who claimed he was in the bank during the incident, the robbers came with sophisticated weapons and started ordering every body to lie down.

"I was standing with the bank manager discussing when they came in shouting on everybody to lie down. We immediately obeyed them and then they asked who the manager is. They took him and went to the vault, demanding for the keys.

"He immediately called the girl who had the keys and they opened the safe and took the money inside it. At the time they came, the bullion van had just arrived and the money was being taken to the strong room. So, they intercepted that money also and went away.

"They did not touch anybody inside the bank, but I cannot say what led to their killing some people outside.

"Students broke the back windscreen of my car and put two dead bodies inside and I took them to ABU Teaching Hospital. They shot the police man attached to the bank from the back and I can confirm to you that he is dead.

"They shot another policeman who is presently in the hospital. I have always heard the police say that they heard the sound of gun they have never heard before and I always thought they were joking. But I heard that today and now, I believe them."

The robbers were said to have dressed in long gown and came in three vehicles, with two of them stationed inside the bank, while the third one stayed beside the University gate keeping watch.

The motorcycle operator who was shot dead was said to have made to escape with his passenger on sighting the robbers while the manager of the restaurant located beside the bank was said to have come out to see what was going on when they sighted him and shot him in the stomach.

Policemen who later arrived the scene reportedly shot a student on the head and was taken to the hospital for treatment.

In the Lagos bank robbery, the bandits struck about 9 a.m. yesterday attempting to break into the bank before anti robbery policemen on duty in the area confronted them.

It was not certain if the suspects succeeded in carting away money or not.

A police source who pleaded for anonymity said the suspect who wielded sophisticated arms, cordoned off the entry and exit points in the area, preparatory for action before they were confronted. The robbers engaged the police in shoot out that lasted for several minutes.

The source added that the suspects later shot sporadically into the air to frighten people in the area in order to pave way for their escape.

He further said that pellets of expended bullets intermittently fell on the roofs of many houses, causing stampede and pandemonium in the area.

He stated that some of the injured persons were people going out their normal activities at that time.

The policeman said the suspects overpowered the gatemen and were about breaking into the bank's vault before the police Armoured Personnel Carriers (APC) arrived.

Confirming the incident, Police Public Relation Officer (PPRO), Mr Olubode Ojajuni said the 16-man robbery gang arrived the bank in the morning but were promptly prevented by the police.

Ojajuni, a superintendent of police said "We got information that gunmen were attempting to rob the bank, the commissioner of police, Mr Mohammed Abubakar immediately directed policemen to move into action. On sighting them, the Marauders fled."

Ojajuni further said "Nobody died on both sides but I was told the gateman of the bank was wounded."

He said investigation has begun into the matter to ensure that the hoodlums are arrested.

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