

## Policeman, 7 others die in robbery operations

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NO fewer than four persons including a policeman were killed and several others injured yesterday by armed robbers who attempted to rob a bank at Ilupeju area of Lagos.

Also in Ibadan, Oyo State, robbers who raided a first generation bank at the University College Hospital (UCH) yesterday however, carted away millions of naira from the bank.

These developments are coming even as four armed robbers were killed in Zamfara State while, the police in Enugu paraded 30 others including a soldier and a native doctor over robbery-related cases.

*Daily Champion* learnt that the two policemen who were critically injured in Lagos were receiving medications at undisclosed hospital in the state.

As at press time, the identities of those killed and injured were not known but a police source said they were passersby who were hit by stray bullets.

The robbers, the source said stormed Ilupeju junction about 10 a.m. preparatory to rob a bank but were frustrated by police detectives who promptly responded to distress call.

He said the about 15 robbers arrived the place in two unpainted buses and were positioning themselves before policemen in Armoured Personnel Carriers (APC) confronted them.

"The robbers were sharing themselves for the job. They wanted to cordon off entry and exit points but the presence of the police shattered their plans," the source added.

According to him, the suspects quickly engaged the police in a gun duel that lasted for several minutes but later fled as the latter got reinforcement.

The suspects met a brick wall he said when they approached the Anthony Village bridge where they met another unit of policemen already fully prepared to confront them.

With the Anthony end blocked the robbers engaged the police in another round of gun duel, a development that resulted the death of a policeman and injury received by several others who were caught in the cross fire.

Confirming the incident the state commissioner of Police, Mr Mohammed Abubakar said one policeman died in the encounter.

Also the Deputy Police Public Relation Officer (DPPRO) Mr Frank Mbah, a deputy superintendent of police said the two injured officers have been taken to a hospital.

Mr Mbah who corroborated the account of our source noted that police prompt response saved several banks in the area from being robbed yesterday.

The police he said killed some of the suspects, even as the robbers escaped with the corpses of their colleagues.

It would be recalled that robbers have recently raided banks in the state even though many of such attacks were foiled by the police.

In Ibadan, the robbers shot three persons including a policeman just as several others sustained varied degrees of injuries.

But in Enugu the State Police Commissioner, Mr. Bashiru Azeez, said while parading the 30

suspects yesterday that some pipeline and PHCN equipment vandals have also been arrested and were already helping the police unmasking others involved in such unwholesome practices.

Giving a report on the activities of his men in the last few weeks, the police commissioner said a crack squad of policemen attached to Nsukka had tracked the 15-man robbery gang that attacked a first generation bank at Nsukka and Orba, adding that among them army private attached to Division one Kaduna.