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4 killed as uniformed robbers raid Lagos banks

By Eugene Agha, Lagos | Publish Date: Nov 20 2015 1:59AM | Updated Date: Nov 20 2015 3:23AM

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Armed robbers dressed in military uniforms yesterday raided six banks at the Agbara Industrial Estate in Lagos.

Four people died in the operation including two policemen, a pregnant woman and a commercial motorcyclist, both of whom were hit by stray bullets.

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Some commercial motorcyclists and tricycle operators were among those injured as the robbers shot indiscriminately at people while speeding off. They arrived the Agbara waterside in two speedboats and escaped through the same route. Before escaping, they set two of their vehicles, an SUV and a bus, ablaze.

Daily Trust gathered that the robbers, among whom were some young women, used dynamites to break bank vaults and move out cash. Some of them held bank staff at gun point while others ransacked drawers and safes in the offices.

The robbers took over the two entry and exit routes into the area where the banks are located. A police Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) stationed in the area was riddled with bullets.

"The robbers emptied all cash collected in our bank into two 'Ghana Must Go' bags before leaving," a staff of one the affected banks told our correspondent, adding, "when they left, we escaped through the back door."

A witness, a commercial motorcyclist, said the robbers came through the waterway behind Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education in Ijanikin at 6.00am. They were said to have hijacked two vehicles inside Agbara market and driven towards Bank Road, Agbara.

It was also gathered that on arrival, the uniformed gang mounted a checkpoint, pretending to be military men on road duty.

"Interestingly, all security personnel at the Agbara check point comprising Customs, Immigration and police went under when the robbers started shooting. First to be attacked was the APC. All the five policemen attached to it took to their heels. One of them fell as a bullet ripped through his legs. There was serious panic in the entire area as early as 7.00am. Most of the commercial vehicle drivers who parked at the Agbara motor park took to their heels while the operation lasted," another witness said.

Daily Trust further learnt that policemen from the Agbara Police Division battled with the robbers with gunshots coming from both ends. By 9.00am, a combined team of soldiers from Ibereko and Ojo had been deployed to assist the police to fight the robbers.

The Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Fatai Owoseni, who confirmed the incident, however said the area where the robbery took place was in Ogun State and not Lagos.

He said after the incident: "Responding to the distress call, policemen from the Lagos Command cordoned off all the waterways in the area with aerial patrol covering the entire route through which the robbers fled. We had surveillance mounted at the bridge at Obadore, Agbara and Ishashi while other areas were combed by our men.

"We also have helicopters patrolling the area. Presently, the robbers

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are being held up along the waters. They have retreated back and are heading towards Ogun State,” he said before press time yesterday.

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