

2 Robbery: Tricycle operator set ablaze in Onitsha

From Titus Eleweke, Awka

One out of a four-man tricycle armed robbery gang that has been terrorising the residents and passengers in Onitsha was set ablaze on Sunday afternoon by an irate mob while allegedly attempting to rob at gunpoint.

The suspected robbers were said to be operating along Army Barracks/Upper Iweka/Borromew round-about axis as well as Asaba/Onitsha/Enugu Expressway in Anambra State.

An eyewitness, who simply identified herself as Rose said, "I saw it all, how it happened because I was at this Green Grain Market (near Army Barracks) when the robbers stopped their Keke to rob some people

who were waiting to board vehicles.

"There were about four of them but the one that was driving the Keke was the one that was arrested and set ablaze by some angry youths who saw what was happening and pursued the robbers and three others escaped abandoning their Keke driver.

"The Keke driver could not run because he was a tall, fat man and elderly in appearance. So, they set him ablaze with fuel and fairly used tyres even as he was shouting that he was not an armed robber."

While the mob was setting the suspected robber ablaze, some tricycle operators stormed the scene and pleaded to the angry mob not to set him ablaze.

They said, "We know him,

he is not an armed robber, we believe he was forced at gun-point by the three-man armed robbers that escaped unhurt, when they flagged him down, pretending to be passengers unknown to him, to take them to that market.

"It was under duress that they held him, but as the two men came out from the Keke to rob, unfortunately for them, they were pursued by passers-by who saw what was happening and the three robbers ran away abandoning the tricycle driver."

The burnt corpse of the tricycle operator was still lying at the scene of the incident.

When contacted, the state police spokesman, Ikenga Tochukwu, said he was not aware of the incident.