

Suspected robber who shot a police chief confesses

By **Odita Sunday**

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An armed robbery suspect, Abiodun Frances, 31, has made startling revelations on how his gang shot a retired Chief Superintendent of Police (CSP), Robinson Aregari, at Markvins Supermarket in Agbara area of Ogun State on January 11, this year.

The officer had attempted to disrupt their operation by deploying his training skills and throwing down one of the suspects, but was unlucky, as another suspect opened fire on him.

Narrating what transpired, Abiodun, who was arrested some days ago, said: “When the police officer wanted to enter the supermarket, he met my second, Taheeb, at the door, while I was busy robbing inside. Taheeb told him that the owner of the supermarket, one Makuochukwu Hycient Obi, and over five customers were laying face down, signifying that there were robbers on duty.

“He commanded him to join those lying face down inside the supermarket and even threatened him with his operational gun. Instead of complying, he suddenly grabbed Taheeb by the waist, lifted him and threw him to the ground and took to his heels. As he was running to go and enter his jeep, Taheeb stood up and fired at him at his left lap.

“When I saw that he did not enter his jeep, I opened the Jeep door and saw his wife. I told his wife to give me the money her husband kept in the car and she told me that he did not keep any money in there. I was left with no other choice but collected her phone and the two phones her husband was charging in the car. I did not collect his wife’s ATM card.



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“We collected 10 phones from the supermarket staff and customers we met there and a bottle of expensive wine, which we drank together while sharing our loot in one uncompleted building.

“I was not the one that shot the police officer. I was carrying a long gun, while Taheeb was carrying short gun and he was the one that shot the officer.”

A source revealed that the victims and the public were unhappy about the inability of Police officers and men in the area to challenge the robbers; hence after some weeks, they reported the incident to the Commander of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Intelligence Response Team (IRT), Abba Kyari, a Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), who directed his team in the state, led by the Southwest Coordinator, Philip Rieninwa, a Chief Superintendent of Police (CSP), to fish out the suspects from his hideout.

Abiodun continued: “My mother is from Badagry, while my father is from Ojo area of Lagos. I attended Macaulay International Primary School, Marobo, along Badagry road. My father is a fisherman, while my mother is a trader and sells food and drinks.

“After my primary education, I went to learn welding because my parents could not afford my higher education. When I got my freedom in 2005, I could not afford the money to get my own workshop, so I started staying at home doing menial jobs.

“Life turned to hell when I joined a secret cult and started drinking and smoking cigarettes and even joined cult members in street fights. In one of the fights, I was axed by one member of the rival group and that is this scar you are seeing (pointing at the scar).

“The wound affected my welding work and it was my parents that took me to hospital and paid the bill. When I was discharged, I started staying at home and my wife was the one taking care of my family. My life changed again when Taheeb came to my house and saw me in a sad mood. He asked why I was not happy and I told him it was because of lacked of money. He told me not to worry, that he would take me to paradise the next day where money has no value.

“We went to a smoking joint where he bought pepper soup, drinks and weed. We were spending money like rich men in town. The following day, I went out with him and had my first baptism of phone snatching. The operation was smooth and sweet. I got enough money that I forgot my sorrow. We robbed many supermarkets and people coming back from work or market during rush hour.

“We were doing well and any time I travelled to see my parents, he would go out alone to rob. There was a time I went to see my father, but when I came back, I heard that he was killed in OPIC Estate where he went to rob in November last year. I thought the case was over until it was reported to IRT. I was relaxing when operatives of IRT stormed my house and arrested me.

“I was surprised to see the shot police officer, because I thought he was dead. I was not the one that shot him; the supermarket CCTV captured the action very well. We don’t shoot victims carelessly unless when victims challenged us or attempt to disarm us or disrupt the operation. We can only rob two or three persons at a time, because we have to manage time to succeed.”



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Narrating his ordeal in the hands of the robbers, Aregari said: “I did not know that the dangerous idiots would be arrested and that is where IRT operatives are showing the difference in intelligence policing and they should be encouraged and motivated.

“I did not intend to waste time in the supermarket, so I parked my car many yards away, with my wife waiting inside. As I approached the supermarket door, one of the hoodlums stopped me and ordered me to lie down and brought out his gun.

“Annoyed by his action, I grabbed him, lifted him up and threw him on the ground and started running away. His second was still on the ground when this rat, Abiodun, fired me at the lap. See where he fired me (pointing to his lap).

“He later went to my jeep and robbed my wife of her ATM card, which they used to empty her account. He took her phone and my two phones I was charging in my car. I escaped by running to the nearby Police station, despite the bullet wound.”

Also narrating his ordeal in the hands of the suspects, Makuochukwu said: “This was the second time they came to my supermarket. They ordered me and the customers to put our face down. I heard when they were talking to the Police officer. Along the line, I heard a gun shot. It was later that I discovered it was the officer that they shot.

“I can’t give you the estimate of the money they collected, because I had the previous sales money with me. They collected all. They were three-man gang, not two. One of them was on a motorcycle outside the supermarket near the road, while two entered.

“I don’t know why this robber (pointing at Abiodun) will say that they were two. They were even the same gang that killed one Alfa (Muslim cleric) that sells provision near Agbara Police station, despite pleading with them to spare his life and carry anything they liked in his shop.

“We even heard that his colleague, Taheeb, was lynched with plank by an irate crowd when they went to rob in the area.”

Items recovered from the suspects include eight phones, one laptop, operational Toyota Sienna car, with vehicle registration number MUS150FP and one motorcycle.