

Robbers Raid Two Banks in Benin, Kill Three

By Uwakwe Abugu
BUREAU CHIEF, Benin

Robbers resumed their onslaught in Benin City, especially on banks, at the weekend, killing two policemen, one civilian and injuring two others.

The armed bandits struck at the First Bank branch office at King's Square (Ring Road) in the heart of the city at about midnight on Sunday and operated till 2 a.m. but couldn't gain entrance into the bank.

However, earlier on Friday a gang of armed robbers successfully raided Akpakpava Road branch of a new generation bank in a rather quiet manner and allegedly carted away about N7million.

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The new police commissioner, Mr. Bala Hassan, who resumed duty in the state about four days ago, said the incident was a big challenge to him but that it would rather fire his zeal to effectively combat crime in the state.

"It is true that a gang of armed robbers invaded the ring road branch of First bank late night. They came in three vehicles, Toyota Hi-Lux Jeep and one other car, all tinted, and with siren (blaring). "It is with this siren that they were able to pass the various police patrols in the town".

According to him, "the incident happened (a) few minutes before mid-night and they have

already entered the bank with the aid of the corrosive substances strongly believed to acid and hydrocarbon gas".

"They melted the protectors with the chemicals they brought and were in the process of getting access to the bank's vault when my men who were alerted moved to the scene.

"Of course, there was a shootout and in the process the robbers killed one of our Inspectors and escaped with his rifle.

"After this, they started running round Benin and somewhere along the Sapele road, they sighted a police patrol vehicle with one Mobile policeman and

another civilian inside.

"They thought the patrol vehicle was after them, so, they opened fire on the vehicle and killed the Mobile policeman and one civilian that were inside the vehicle".

On the raid on the new generation bank, police spokesman, Peter Ogboi, said he got hints on the incident but that he didn't have any details of the operations.

He said the new trend now was for the robbers to use explosives while robbing banks, but said the police were ready to stand up to it. According to him, some of the robbers who fled the bank after the sporadic shootout must have sustained bullet wounds, and that certainly, they will be tracked down.