

Ogun Police Quiz Four Over Murder Of Herdsman

By Femi Ogbonnikan
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RECENTLY, sleepy Ibeshe town in Ogun State boiled following a bloody clash between herdsmen and natives of the community, though the clash was swiftly put under control by security agents. Residents fled the community for fear of reprisal attacks, a member of the affected community said.

Daily Independent learnt that the clash came up because of the herds of cow belonging to the herdsmen, and which ravaged all farm produce of the host community. During the face-off that lasted for about nine hours, one herdsman and his cows were reportedly killed.

Consequently, four suspects have been arrested and are currently being detained at the homicide section of the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID), Eleweran, Abeokuta, Ogun State Police Command headquarters, for a discrete probe into the matter.

Ogun State Police Commissioner (CP), Musa Daura, while parading the four suspects before newsmen at Eleweran, on Tuesday, February 16, 2010, confirmed the arrest of three



•Musa Daura, Ogun CP

siblings and an accomplice, Moses Balogun. They are Daniel Debi, Bayo Debi and

Joel Debi in connection with the matter.

According to the CP, the

timely response of police detectives from Ewekoro Divisional Police Station to the crime scene prevented the situation from escalating.

It was gathered that one Rabo Shuhu lodged a complaint at the police station that Malami Arolo, a resident of Atole Village, who also reared cattle was attacked and shot dead when he was returning home from the farm where he had taken his cows for grazing. One was reported stolen in the ensuing commotion.

It was gathered that the incident occurred on Thursday, February 11, 2010, at about 5:22p.m. and lasted till 8:45a.m., the following day.

In a chat with Daily Independent, three of the suspects absolved themselves of any complicity in the attack, while the accomplice admitted privy to the onslaught.

Moses Balogun, 35, narrated his own version of the genesis of the attack.

According to him, "I was not aware of the incident until the son of the paramount ruler of our community came to me. I was at home early in the morning on Thursday, February 11, 2010, when the son of Baale of Atanla Village,

Alabi, came to my house and brought a basket full of okra for my wife to sell on his behalf next market day. I was forced to ask him, why my wife and not himself? It was then he narrated the incident me that a cow belonging to one of the herdsmen was killed by some unknown men. Few hours later, we heard sporadic gunshots between some men, but we subsequently got to know it was between the herdsmen and some hunters. Nobody could get nearer to the scene. But the following day, Alabi came back and told me he saw a corpse of one of the herdsmen by the roadside and that he quickly reported what he saw to the Baale of Ago Oho.

"And the moment my wife returned home later in the evening, I delivered the message and gave the okra to her to sell. But on Saturday, February 13, 2010, I was at home when plain-clothed policemen, who introduced themselves as homicide detectives from the SCID, Eleweran, Abeokuta, came and arrested me. They told me they were looking for one Ita. They asked me to identify

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Lagos Police Foil Bank Robbery, Kill Two On Okada

By Andrew Utulu
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THE NAME 'Akpoiyibo' rings bell in the minds of armed robbers in Lagos State and those in neighbouring states. He is the Lagos State Commissioner of Police (CP), Marvel Akpoiyibo, a police officer, who does not compromise criminality and corruption. And for that, men of the underworld dread him. His toughness towards armed robbers has led to relative peace in Lagos. Some of those who dared the police by striking at banks either during the day or at night have met their untimely deaths. As they change their modus operandi, Akpoiyibo also changes his security tactics to beat their antics.

To some of them, attacking banks is almost like a camel passing through the eye of a needle, so they have devised a method of attacking customers either going to deposit money or withdraw from the banks, after obtaining information on movements of such customers. But Akpoiyibo has also placed his officers on red alert with stringent security measures to monitor such

dare devil armed robbers.

As breaking into the banks has become almost impossible, the unrepentant armed robbers who have devised the means of trailing bank customers last Monday met their Waterloo.

Two of them were gunned down by police detectives from Apapa Police Division, led by the Divisional Police Officer (DPO), Ali Muhammed, a Chief Superintendent of Police (CSP).

Daily Independent gathered that the incident happened at about 2p.m. when the two robbers who operated with a windy motorcycle started trailing a bank customer who had gone to withdraw unspecified amount of money from a bank located on Warehouse Road, Apapa.

The victim was said to have been trailed to Point Road, Apapa, where the armed robbers attacked him.

It was gathered that anti-robbery policemen were alerted that robbers were operating in the neighbourhood and the team raced to the scene.

Daily Independent further gathered that as soon as the robbers sighted the police, they opened fire and the

police responded promptly.

After a few minutes of exchange of gunfire, the two robbers were gunned down.

Police sources disclosed that one locally made double barrel pistol with two live cartridges as well as their operational motorcycle were recovered.

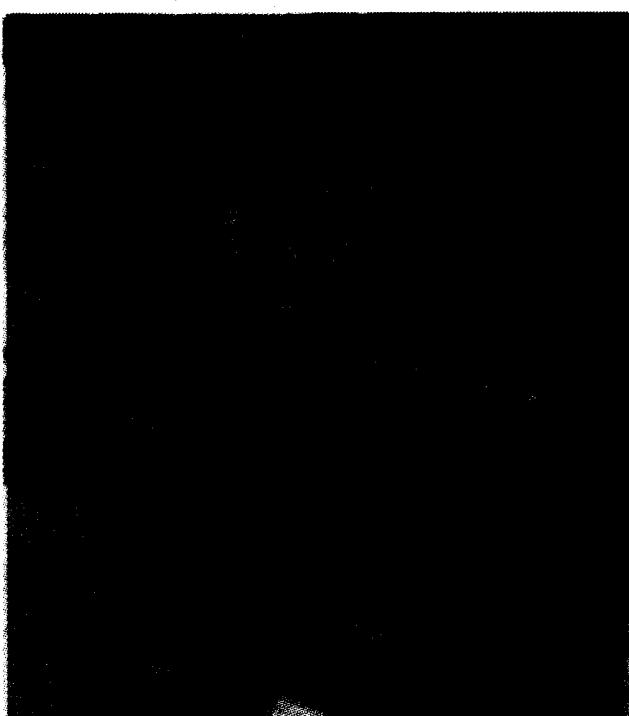
In a related development, a bank robbery was averted at Iju area of the state the same week by anti-robbery policemen from Red House Police Station, Iju.

The operation that stalled the robbery was led by its Divisional Police Officer, Prince Ogbonna Remy, following a distress call from the commands control room.

The robbers said to be 10 in number had gone to attack a Micro Finance Bank located along Iju-Agege road in three private cars at about 3a.m., while residents of the area were asleep.

Daily Independent learnt that the security guard on duty at the bank was tied with rope before the robbers started their operation by breaking into the bank with a sledge hammer.

But they could not penetrate, before some neighbours were said to have alerted the police, who promptly arrived



•Dead bank robbers

at the scene and engaged the robbers in gun battle. The superior fire power of the police was said to have forced the robbers to abandon their mission and escaped.

Police sources said the robbers were armed with

several tools to break into the house including a gas cylinder and a welding machine, which they had wanted to use in cutting the bank iron doors and vault. They were said to have all been recovered from the scene.

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myself and I told them I am not Ita, but Moses by name. Thereafter, they asked me to follow them to the *Baale's* palace where the chief and his subjects would identify me. But unfortunately, the *Baale* was not at home and I was asked to follow them to the SCID. That was how I found myself here at Eleweran, explained the farmer.

Joel Debi, 20, also denied complicity in the murder attack.

According to him, he was conveying his elder brother, one Isaac, who recently had an accident, to Ibeshe General Hospital, on his motorcycle before he ran into the dragnet of the detectives. "On Saturday, February 13, 2010, I was accosted on my way and asked to follow them with my brother. But when they saw his unstable health condition, he was allowed to return home," offered the

okada operator and a native of Oja-Odan, Ipokia Local Government Area, Ogun State.

Also, Daniel Debi, 35, claimed he was not around when the incident occurred, but was away to his hometown, Oja-Odan.

The suspect explained the genesis of his arrest to *Daily Independent*.

"I was away to Oja-Odan when I received a telephone call from Alhaji Fulani, who asked me to see him. When I saw him, he narrated how some people had invaded Atola Village and killed a cow. He explained what happened and I left with two other people to see the *Baale*. We

discussed the problem with the *Baale* and he advised us to go to the paramount ruler of Ibeshe and also do our findings on the immediate and remote causes of the incident and those behind the ugly clash. We did as he advised. When we reported back to him, he also advised us to see the *Seriki*, head of the Hausa/Fulani in the community. By the time we got to him, the detectives were also on ground and the *Seriki* asked one of the men who had already been arrested to identify whether we were among the assailants. It was in that process that Bayo was fingered and another man, but who narrowly escaped

from the place. And because the man, Israel, was able to bolt away, I was arrested to replace him. It was from there we were taken to Ewekoro Police Station before we were transferred to the SCID, Abeokuta," said the farmer.

But Bayo Debi, 30, could not absolve himself because he was a living witness to the attack.

The suspect confessed that he was in the farm before the clash, and that the ugly incident occurred on the community market day.

"When the incident occurred because we were in our farm and my wife expressed shock, warning that if we did not leave the

place on time we might be consumed in the commotion. When I began to see hunters, armed with guns and moving in droves I sensed something unpalatable might occur. Not quite long I saw Ita and asked what the siege was all about, but he told me the build-up tension was over the ravaging of farm produce by cows. I was still plucking okra until I began to hear sporadic gunshots. I had to leave on time and hopped on my motorcycle, with my wife and tied the basket of okra on the pillion of the machine and sped off. I took the okra straight to the market to dispose them of. It was on Saturday February 13,

2010, that detectives came to my house to arrest me. I was told that they saw me at the scene of attack. That was how my name was mentioned among those who killed the herdsman and his cow. I was taken to Ewekoro Police Station and subsequently, taken to the SCID, Eleweran, where I have been detained till date," said the Oja-Odan-born suspect.

However, Daura vowed to ensure that other culprits behind the incident were arrested soon and brought to book. Those already arrested, he added would be arraigned in court as soon as investigations are concluded into the matter.