

Robbers kill four in Anambra, injure two policemen

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DARE devil armed robbers on Tuesday morning unleashed terror on Onitsha, Anambra

• Banks close shop in Bauchi, reopen in Ogun

State commercial city, leaving in their trail blood and tears.

They killed two persons in the process and injured two police officers.

This is in spite of the fact that

the Anambra State Government had just launched a security trust fund in Awka, the state capital.

In Ozubulu, Ekwusigbo Local Government Area, a simi-

lar attack was also carried out resulting in the death of two persons.

Meanwhile, in Abeokuta, Ogun State capital, mobile policemen took strategic posi-

tions on Tuesday as banks reopened to customers who had been scared away by incessant armed robbery incidents.

According to eyewitnesses, the Onitsha robbery incident which started at about 8.20

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a.m. at the Upper Iwaka Road, by Woliwo junction, was carried out by a four-man gang who laid siege on a trader they suspected was transferring an undisclosed sum of money.

After robbing the victim, who surrendered the money without any struggle, sources said the robbers in their bid to escape came face to face with a patrol vehicle belonging to 54 Mobile Police Force (PMF), Onitsha, and opened fire on them, injuring two of the officers while stray bullets killed a passer-by and a truck driver.

A source at the scene disclosed that policemen from the Central Police Station (CPS), Onitsha, led by the Divisional Police Officer (DPO), Yusuf Ibrahim, gave the hoodlums a hot chase.

On sighting the oncoming vehicles of the police, the armed robbers who operated with two motorcycles, escaped through Ogbor Avenue in Woliwo layout towards the Inland town of the commercial city.

Meanwhile, after the incident which left traders and residents of the area in a state of confusion, members of the Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) mobilised themselves to calm down the situation while the policemen went after the fleeing gang members.

MASSOB Director of Information, Uchenna Madu, said they went to save the situation, to calm the already tensed city by restoring normalcy and to control traffic, adding that it was their duty for Ndigbo.

Madu also reiterated the readiness of MASSOB to protect the Onitsha traders and their customers, especially during the yuletide.

He warned armed robbers that Onitsha would remain their greatest problem in the country.

When contacted, Anambra State Commissioner of Police, Muktar Ibrahim, said the command had not been briefed on the incident, but affirmed the readiness of the police to rid

the state of criminal elements during and after Christmas period.

It would be recalled that the Bankers Committee had ordered the closure of banks in Abeokuta following armed robbery attacks.

Speaking at the parade of mobile policemen deployed to combat the spate of crime, Ogun State Commissioner of Police, Nicholas Nkemdeme, assured that the command was ready to combat crime.

"Everybody is talking as if the police in Ogun have nothing to offer, this is basically not so.

"We are committed to the jobs at hand and with your commitment we are going to make the state safe for everyone."

He, thereafter, charged whoever has useful information to furnish the command with such, adding that the police would rely on useful information from reliable members of the public.

Meanwhile, all financial institutions remained closed in Azare, Katagum local govern-

ment area of Bauchi State following an attack by gunmen last Sunday at a police station and two banks in the area.

Information Officer of the Katagum Local Government Council, Bashir Chenede, told our correspondent in an interview that the remaining financial institutions not affected by the attack decided to close shops in solidarity with the affected ones.

Chenede disclosed that security operatives were patrolling Azare town and environs while a dusk to dawn curfew from 8.00 p.m. to 6.00 a.m. has been imposed on the town.

He said "dusk to dawn curfew has been imposed in Azare town and other surrounding villages following the incident.

"Yesterday, I was coming into Azare town from Kano and had to spend the night in a hotel, as I couldn't reach my house when I learnt of people being beaten up by security men enforcing the curfew.

"I also learnt of vehicles being smashed by the security operatives," Chenede added.