

Three killed as robbers strike in Ogun

THREE persons were killed yesterday when armed robbers struck in a bank in Abeokuta, Ogun State. The robbers also made away with millions of naira in the incident which happened in Panseke, a suburb of Abeokuta.

Also, in Ado-Ekiti, the Ekiti State capital, a 12-man robbery gang yesterday stormed an old generation bank on Ajilosun Street and carted away an undisclosed amount of money.

According to eye-witnesses, the five-man robbery gang arrived the bank with sophisticated weapons around 11.39am.

On their arrival, *The Nation* learnt, the robbers shot into the air to create panic, and scare away people.

They went into the banking hall and ordered staffers and customers to lie face down.

Besides rushing to grab the money on the counters where cashiers were busy attending to customers, the robbers also raided the customers, dispossessing them

**From Femi Shodunke,
(Abeokuta) and Odunayo
Ogunmola, (Ado-Ekiti)**

of money, cellphones and other valuables.

The robbers raided the bank for about 20 minutes and escaped before the arrival of policemen from the Police Command, who, *The Nation* learnt, got the information late.

The hoodlums, it was learnt, fired bullets indiscriminately into the air to ease their escape, and in the process shot some of the private guards at the bank.

The development sent the market women and men and passersby within the Panseke vicinity to run helter skelter for safety.

Police spokesperson Femi Awoyale, confirmed the bank raid, but said only one person was killed.

Awoyale, a Deputy Superintendent (DSP), said two other people were seriously injured.

He said his men chased the robbers and recovered a dark brown Daewoo Racer car, one locally made pistol,

cellphone and an AK 47 assault rifle from them.

"We are closing on them, the villagers have been helpful in this regard," he said.

In the Ado-Ekiti incident, the robbers, who stormed the bank in a commando style, operated unchallenged for about 35 minutes. They shot sporadically into the air and cordoned off the highway. They began the operation at about 1.45 pm and left the scene at about 2.20 pm.

The shooting threw residents into panic as the bullets fired by the robbers reached places like the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure. Internet browsers using a cybercafe opposite the bank narrowly escaped being hit by stray bullets which entered the cybercafe.

Business and social activities were paralysed while the incident lasted. Vehicles coming into and leaving Ado-Ekiti via Akure were diverted to smaller routes to avoid being caught in the crossfire. Offices, shops and business centres

in the area were hurriedly closed.

They came in three vehicles and by the time they were through with their operation, they reportedly made away with cash inside 11 *Ghana-Must-Go* bags and sped off through Ikere Road.

Eyewitnesses said the robbers on entering the banking hall asked "Where is the government money! Where is the government money!!" fuelling suspicion that they were acting on a tip-off.

When *The Nation* arrived at the scene after the hoodlums had left, the gate leading to the bank was sealed off with armed policemen standing guard at the entrance of the bank.

A crowd stood on the other side of the main road, discussing the incident.

None of the members of staff of the bank offered to speak with reporters but a customer, who witnessed the attack, said the robbers battered some bank workers, who did not respond on time to their request. He said