

# Robbers kill DPO, three policemen in Ekiti

## •LP chieftain, others lose vehicles

**A** Divisional Police Officer (DPO) and three others were feared killed yesterday by suspected armed robbers in Ijan-Ekiti in Gbonyin Local Government Area of Ekiti State.

The DPO, whose name police authorities declined to give, was said to have been killed by the fleeing robbers who had earlier stormed Ado-Ekiti where they snatched a Honda car at about 8.00 am.

But the police denied the death of the DPO, saying doctors were battling to save his life at the Emergency Unit of the University of Ado-Ekiti Teaching Hospital.

No fewer than four cars were snatched on the Ikere-Akure Road yesterday. Among them was that of the Publicity Secretary of the Labour Party (LP) in Ondo State, Mr. Ranti Akerele.

He lost his maroon Crystal Status car marked LAGOS BG 593 APP on Ikere-Akure Road.

Apostle Blessing Shadare was robbed of a black Toyota Corolla car marked 149 AAA belonging to a local government council in the Akoko area of Ondo State.

The robbers also collected a large sum of money from

**From Odunayo Ogunmola, Ado-Ekiti**

their victims.

The robbers' escape bid from Ado-Ekiti ran into a hitch at the gate of Ijanmodu Comprehensive High School on the outskirts of the town when one of the tyres of the car in which they were fleeing was punctured.

As they were changing the tyre, they sighted an oncoming police patrol vehicle and opened fire.

The exchange of fire between the robbers and the policemen disrupted traffic on the Ado-Ikare road as motorists detoured or abandoned their vehicles.

Sources told reporters that the robbers' bullets allegedly hit the DPO who was said to be sitting in front of the police patrol van.

One of the policemen was said to have lost his rifle to the bandits.

The robbers were said to have escaped from the scene by snatching a Volkswagen Jetta car.

A source at the hospital confirmed the death of the DPO and three other policemen.

He said they died on their way to the hospital.

The Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Mr. Mike Akindipe, an Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), who confirmed the incident, said nobody had died by the time he left the hospital.

Akindipe, who refused to disclose the name of the DPO, said the officer was still receiving treatment at the hospital.

The state chapter of the Action Congress (AC) expressed worry over the increasing wave of armed robbery, especially in Ado-Ekiti.

It said the state government had lost control of the security situation, alleging that the hoodlums used to rig elections were now holding the state to ransom.

It said the spate of robberies "is a cruel testimony that the Ekiti PDP regime has ceded the state into the hands of idle roughnecks who were engaged to snatch ballot boxes at gunpoint during the April 2007 general elections."

In a statement by the Head, Media Committee, AC Governorship Campaign, Mr. Yemi Adaramodu, entitled:

"Ekiti is now controlled by robbers", the party regretted that "agents of Satan had seized the peace and security of the state and the once most peaceful state had become a haven for robbers, car snatchers and burglars."

"It is noteworthy that nearly all commercial banks in Ekiti have been visited by these devious servants of the devil and the PDP regime could not take any decisive action to curb the menace.

"The latest escapades of these marauders have shown that the PDP regime and its officials surreptitiously welcomed the men of the underworld with open arms.

"The PDP has lost more than five official cars purchased with public funds to these satanic agents whom we believe were once used to carry arms against the electorate at the last violent and terror-ridden general elections. The PDP and the devil found work for many idle hands in 2007 and since the PDP had nothing to keep those hands engaged, the devil is solely using them against the state," the AC said.