

Bank robbery: 2 cops, 2 suspects killed

From ARCHIBONG
ESUENE, Makurdi

A FOUR-man robbery gang raided Naka Community Bank in Gwer-West Local Council Area of Benue State, killing two police men and three civilians including a woman who sells *akara* far opposite the bank.

According to our sources, the four-man gang of which one of the suspects is a senior staff of Gwer-West Local Government stormed the community bank at about 2pm and carted away about six million Naira withdrawn from the First Bank in the early hours of Monday for October salaries of the local government staff.

But it was not *uhuru* for the dreaded men of the underworld as the anti-robbery squad got wind of the operation and stormed the area and in a gun battle two members of the gang were gunned down.

Addressing journalists at the state Police Command, the Benue State Police Commissioner, Mr. C. P. Ibezimako Aghas confirmed the story, promising that his men are getting closer to the other two suspects who are on the run.

The Benue State Police boss explained that the operation was carried out with the support of an insider because the cheque of six million Naira was issued on Friday November 10, 2006 and they could not cash the money and commence payment because it was late.

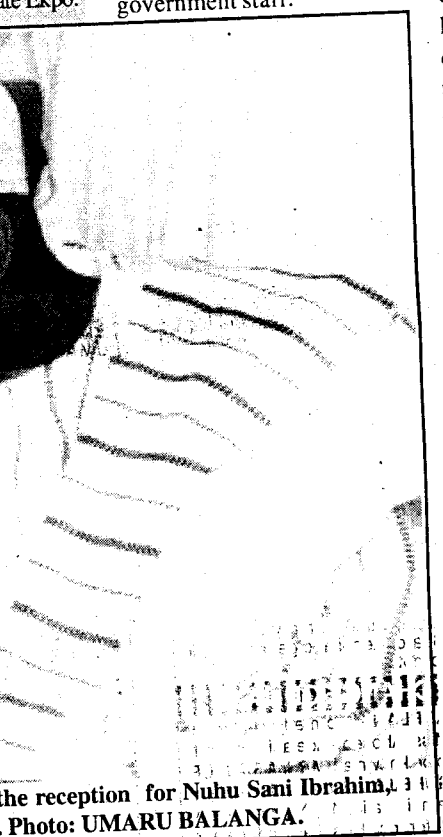
"Early Monday morning around 9am, the money was collected from the First Bank and taken to the Naka Community Bank where the staff of the local government were expected to pick it up but by 2pm the robbery gang invaded the bank."

The commissioner explained that when his men arrived the scene, the men of the underworld were shooting at random while speeding off in their red starlet car that later got burnt along the way for them to abandon it in the bush with the money and "there was exchange of fire in which two of the robbers were killed," he added.

He further stated that the policemen withdrew when it was getting dark in the night and returned in the morning combing everywhere and discovered the corpses of two of them who were shot but could not run again and an AK 47 riffle with 69 rounds of ammunition.

Mr. Aghanya said the command has gotten useful information about the robbery gang, and within the next 48 hours, I am assuring you that my men will get the escaped robbers.

The police commissioner also displayed about 304,000 Naira, a local government staff identity card of one of the suspects with his photograph, Mr. Jiir, an Assistant Chief Personnel Officer with the local council.



the reception for Nuhu Sani Ibrahim.
Photo: UMARU BALANGA.

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"In the past we used to have different policies, coat of arms by states, but the military banned them because they thought they were not in the interest of national unity. Under democracy there is need to give some self-determination to federating units without compromising unity." Dr. Bukar said.

"Don't tight the belt for everybody. Give self-respect to them provided that it would not lead to national disintegration". He maintained.