

on Tuesday, which was under construction, was situated was still ongoing on the deck when the incident happened. The government officials have ordered that works be stopped until the building collapse will be investigated."

Police arrest three over bureau de change operators' death in Lagos

Olaekan Olabulo | Lagos

THE police in Lagos State have arrested three suspected members of a gang who allegedly abducted and killed two bureau de change operators at Ikorodu area of the state in March.

The suspects were arrested by the operations of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) after a directive from the state Commissioner of Police, Zubairu Muazu.

The bureau de change operators were identified as Alhaji Yakubu Musa and Alhaji Hassan Umoru, and had gone for a business transaction with the gang when they were murdered.

The gang members were said to have taken the bureau de change operators to an abandoned building at Odogunyan area of Ikorodu, where they were bound and shot dead, after they had paid N1.6 million as ransom into an account provided by the gang.

The arrested suspects were identified as Oluwatosin Olarewaju, Mayowa Olawuni and Babatunde Idris; and they reportedly dumped the corpses of the businessmen in a septic tank in an abandoned building at Odogunyan. In his confession, one of the suspects, Oluwatosin, said that "Pencil (the leader of the gang) and I planned the

deal, but the intention was not to kill them. Pencil said I should convince the operators to come; that an Alhaja wanted to buy \$10,000.

"The operators came on a motorbike and called us from trailer park bus-stop, Odogunyan. Pencil directed his own motorcycle rider to take the operators to a building's boys' quarters around Odogunyan.

"By the time I joined them at the boys' quarters, I met the men lying down with their hands tied. Pencil asked me to lie on the floor too, so as to make it look like I didn't have a hand in the game.

"Pencil told them that the person they came to meet

of the incident.

"We should stop using peo-

was owing him 10,000 dollars and that his gang had come to collect the money.

"They started beating the operator. I also received my share of the beating to make it look real. The operators begged Pencil to stop beating them; that they would give him money for their freedom.

"Pencil instructed them to transfer the money into one Femi's account, but when Pencil called to know if the money had been paid, the account holder said no.

"At that point, he changed the game plan. He threatened to kill me alongside the operators if he did not receive alert on the pay-

benga Fadeyi, who confirmed the incident, said the reports

ment. He said he suspected I was playing pranks by asking the person at the other end not to reveal he had received the alert. He said if he did not receive the alert by 4.55 p.m., he would kill all of us.

"At that point, one of the operators suggested that another account, should be given to him to pay into. That was when I contacted Oluwafunmilayo, the nurse that treated me when I was sick. The operator paid in N1.6 million into that account.

"By 8:00 p.m., same day, they tore the operators' clothes and used the pieces to cover their mouths. When I asked Pencil why he

was doing that, he asked if I wanted to teach him his job.

"He took one of the operators to the back and later sent for the second operator. He shot both of them dead and said that was the only way to cover up our tracks since they knew me.

"Next day, we contacted the nurse to go and withdraw the money from the bank. But by the time we got there, she said she could only withdraw N500,000.

"Kenneth collected it from him. She later gave us another N500,000 and a balance of N470,000. I got N340,000 as my share of the loot."