

Palm oil merchant dies of gunshot wounds after being robbed of over N1 million

A palm oil merchant in Umuahia, Abia State, Mr Basil Odoemelam, who was robbed of over N1 million on Thursday, has died from gunshot wounds.

The **News Agency of Nigeria (NAN)** learnt that Odoemelam died around 6.00 p.m. on Friday at the Federal Medical Centre (FMC), Umuahia, where he was taken to after the attack.

His business ally told **NAN** on the condition of anonymity that he gave up the ghost in the theatre while doctors were carrying out surgery to remove bullets that lodged in his lower abdomen.

The gunmen were alleged to have shot him five times in the leg and lower abdomen before dispossessing him of the bag containing the money.

The deceased's younger brother, Ejima Odoemelam, who was seen weeping profusely at FMC, confirmed the death to **NAN**.

It will be recalled that a three-member armed gang on Thursday trailed the de-

ceased from an old generation bank after he had reportedly withdrawn over N1 million to pay for goods supplied to him.

Eyewitnesses said the gunmen, who operated with a Toyota Camry car, crossed the tricycle conveying him in near the General Post Office, Aba Road, Umuahia, at about 3.00 pm, accosted him and shot him while taking the money.

The hoodlums escaped through Bende Road after the operation, while sympathisers, who thronged the scene, quickly carried Odoemelam to FMC.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Abia State, SP Geoffrey Ogbonna, expressed concern over the incident and appealed to the public to assist the command with information that could help in arresting the bandits.

"I therefore appeal to residents of Umuahia to assist the command with credible information that will help us to track them down," Ogbonna said.

Gunmen open fire on youths,