

Two feared killed as robbers storm bank in Lagos

Olalekan Adetayo

TWO persons including a policeman was, on Wednesday, feared killed and one injured as heavily armed men suspected to be robbers stormed the Ogudu branch of a bank in Lagos.

The armed men, numbering about 15, arrived at the bank at about 9am when full banking operations had started.

The men, who were shooting sporadically, reportedly overwhelmed the security men on duty and forced their way into the bank premises.

In the process, they shot a private security guard at a close range, leaving him with gunshot injury on his arm.

As at the time our correspondent visited the bank, a pool of blood was noticed at the entrance while a police beret, a pair of police boots, a white glove and expended shells littered the ground.

Our correspondent also saw a welder working on the iron gate that led to the banking floor, and some of the bank's cleaners mopping the floor.

Three vehicles, with wind-screens shattered by bullets, were also parked by the road in front of the bank.

The vehicles were a Mercedes Benz 190E marked BS 37 KJA; a Mitsubishi Sigma car marked DL 250 ABC, and a Volkswagen bus with registration number XH 437 EKY.

Some of the bank's officials were seen turning back prospective customers who were unaware of the incident.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Lagos State Police Command, Mr. Olubode Ojajuni, a deputy superintendent of police, confirmed the incident to our correspondent.

Ojajuni said three per-

were assisting the police in their investigations into the case, adding that the hoodlums' operational vehicle, a bus, had been recovered.

But the driver of the bus, who is being held at the anti-robbery section of the state command headquarters, told our correspondent that two men suspected to be members of the gang hired him from Ketu on the pretext that he would help them convey cartons of fish from Ogudu.

The driver, who identified himself as Agba, said they (Agba and the two men) were beside a river at Ogudu when a speed boat conveying about 15 heavily armed men arrived.

He said on arrival at the shore, the men threw him inside the river; two waited inside the boat; two held him inside the river, while others sped off in his bus.

Agba said no sooner had the n... than he started hearing

gunshots from a distance.

He said the men returned a few minutes later, shot him on his thigh where he was lying down and escaped with the boat.

His teenage assistant corroborated his story, saying that his boss sent him to buy cigarette for him at a nearby make-shift shop while he (the boss) stayed with the men at the riverside.

He said, "Suddenly, I looked back and I saw our bus speeding off with full capacity. The driver was wearing a fez cap; he was definitely not my boss. The men were between 12 and 14.

"I became curious and ran after them only for me to begin to hear gunshots. By the time I returned to the riverside, I met my boss, completely wet, on the floor and he told me that the men threw him inside the water."