

Two shot as robbers escape from eatery

Kunle Adeyemi

TWO persons were shot in Lagos on Tuesday when a gang of armed men made a desperate attempt to escape from an eatery after unleashing terror on their victims.

It was not, however, clear whether the stray bullets that hit the men were from policemen's guns or from the robbers' guns.

Our correspondent learnt that a distress call was sent to the Man Centre Police Station in Ikeja at about 10:40pm that some gunmen were raiding an eatery (name withheld) on Adeniyi Jones Avenue, Ikeja.

A team of anti-robbery policemen, it was gathered, was sent to the scene to arrest the situation just as the staff and a few customers found at the eatery were taken hostage.

The policemen arrived on the scene just at the time the robbers were on their way out after they had raided the eatery.

According to a police source, as soon as the robbers sighted the policemen, they fired their guns indiscriminately in a bid to escape from the scene.

But it was gathered that the policemen also engaged the robbers in a shoot-out before the gunmen escaped.

Two stray bullets from the shots hit the two men who became the victims of the robbery. It was not clear

whether the victims were on the road or were in the eatery.

Although nobody was able to identify the victims at the time of the incident, they were, nonetheless, rushed to a nearby hospital for medical attention.

Our correspondent learnt that the men were responding to treatment and might

soon be discharged from the hospital.

Spokesman for the Lagos State Police Command, Mr. Olubode Ojajuni, confirmed the incident to our correspondent on Wednesday.

Ojajuni, who said the case was being investigated, however, maintained that the bullets that hit the men came from the robbers' guns and not from his men.

Bandits raid bank in Eket

Chukwudi Akasike, Uyo

ARMED robbers on Wednesday raided one of the new generation banks in Eket Local Government area of Akwa Ibom State.

The hoodlums, who were said to have besieged the bank in three vehicles at 12:30am on Wednesday, shot sporadically into the air, apparently to ensure that nobody could challenge them.

Our correspondent gathered that the hoodlums gained access into the bank by scaling the fence before shooting down its bullet-proof doors.

The bandits created a hole on the wall of the main banking hall and entered through the hole, but they could not break the safe before the arrival of the police.

The commissioner in charge of the state police command, Mr. Moses Anegbode, told our correspondent that the hoodlums where about breaking the

safe when his men got to the scene.

He said the policemen shot at some of the robbers, but they (robbers) ran into the bush.

Anegbode said the robbers did not take away any money from the bank, stating that the police had begun investigation into the incident.

He said, "My men went for them and actually shot at one of their vehicles. They were able to recover a gas cylinder which they would have used in gaining access to the safe."

"We are ready to battle these criminals to a standstill and we have mapped out new strategies to halt bank robberies in the state."

The latest incident was the sixth time robbers would attack banks in the state in the last six months.

Another popular bank was raided in Uyo, the state capital three weeks ago. Two persons were killed during the operation.

Police, community disagree over death of suspects

Chukwudi Akasike, Uyo

THE death of two suspects during the April 14 governorship and House of Assembly elections has pitted the police against the Okorette community in Obolo Local Government area of Akwa Ibom State.

While some members of the community claimed that the police had a hand in the death of their sons- Ebenezer David and Claudius Philip- the police maintained that the men died after embarking on a three-day hunger strike.

Speaking with our correspondent on Wednesday in Uyo, the commissioner in charge of the state police command, Mr. Moses Anegbode, said his men were not responsible for the death of the men.

Anegbode said the deceased had gone on a three-day hunger strike immediately they were put in the cell after being arrested for the murder of two officials of the Independent National Electoral Commission and the attempted murder of a policeman.

According to him, the suspects had concealed some quantities of Indian hemp in their knickers before they entered the cell.

Anegbode said, "The police never knew that the suspects were wearing two shorts each and had concealed some quantities of the dangerous substance in the inner ones."

"They refused to eat for three days and we later found out from the immediate brother, who was also ar-

rested alongside the deceased that his brothers were smoking Indian hemp in the prison.

"When we noticed that they were ill, they were rushed to the hospital where they later died. The result of the autopsy will be out on Friday and you will see that there is no foul play anywhere."

Earlier in an interview with newsmen, a community leader and the head of the family of the deceased, Chief Mclean had claimed that David and Philip might have died through poisoning or torture.

Ujile had questioned the rationale behind the release and re-arresting of David and Philip whom he alleged died in detention on the 22nd of April, 2007.