

Robbers raid banks, two killed

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THE Joint Task Force in Akwa Ibom State killed two members of an armed robbery gang that raided the Union Bank in Eket, Akwa Ibom State and carted away an unidentified sum of money.

The armed bandits, who were about 20 in number, struck around 9.30am on Friday and shot sporadically into the air, apparently to scare people away before gaining entrance into the bank.

The latest raid of the bank is the second within nine months.

An eyewitness told *Sunday Punch* that about five persons got injured while trying to leave the premises of the bank.

The eyewitness, who identified himself as Usiere, disclosed that the Joint Task Force in the state later rushed to the bank premises and engaged the armed bandits

in a fierce gun battle.

Usiere said that though, they succeeded in carting some amount of money, the Joint Task Force in the state was able to kill two while some escaped with gunshot wounds.

He stated, "The armed robbers came with sophisticated guns and shot several times into the air. Some of us became very scared and we scampered for safety in order not to be hit by stray bullets.

"When the joint task force closed in on them, two of them missed their vehicles and ran into an uncompleted building. The soldiers found them out and shot them.

"Some of the armed robbers were able to escape with injuries after they were shot by the combined team of soldiers and policemen."

It was gathered that those within the bank's vicinity deserted the area as a result

of the deafening sound of sporadic gunshots, which lasted for about 15 minutes.

However, the joint task force was seen at the state police command in Uyo parading one of the corpses of the armed robbers at about 6pm on Friday.

Also displayed were some weapons and charms recovered from the hoodlums during the operation.

When *Sunday Punch* contacted the state Police Public Relations Officer, Mr Gab Ngban, he confirmed the robbery incidence and said that the JTF was able to dislodge the bandits.

Ngban noted that he was not aware whether the armed robbers succeeded in carting away any amount of money.

Ngban explained that three of the armed robbers were shot dead while various arms and ammunition were recovered from them.