

Bloody day as gunmen kill 4 dead in Benin

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From **Ighomuaye Lucky**, Benin

It was a bloody day in Benin City yesterday, as armed robbers, shot four persons including a baby dead at the New Benin axis of the state.

Four other persons sustained different degrees of gunshot wounds as the hoodlums, one of who was said to have been armed with an AK 47 assault rifle shot sporadically into the air to disperse residents. This however forced traders and those in the neighborhood to scamper for safety.

Traders and residents of the adjoining Owoseni, Yoruba, Upper Lawani and other neighbouring streets in New Benin hurriedly closed their shops.

According to an eyewitness, the robbers had stormed the popular New Benin market robbing from shop to shop and ran away after robbing their victims but were pursued by some brave traders and neighbours through the streets as they shot intermittently to scare people.

Hot in pursuit by the traders and residents, the robbers reportedly shot dead a grinder at the market along Owoseni Street/Yoruba Street junction while the two year old infant was shot dead right on the mother's back and the remaining two along the adjoining streets.

Blood flowed freely on the streets as some policemen from the Rapid Response Squad joined in the manhunt as the fleeing robbers reportedly snatched a Sports Utility Vehicle, (SUV) with which they escaped.

It was weeping and wailing as residents gathered to assess the damage long after the gunmen were gone just as they stood speechless when the corpses were evacuated to a nearby mortuary.

The eyewitness who was also wounded on the stomach by bullets explained further: “I was in my house when I heard the sound of gunshots. When I came out, I saw people running. I was told that it was robbers who had just finished robbing traders at the New Benin market and I joined the pursuit. I was hit on the stomach by a flying bullet fired by the robbers, which bounced off the wall.” The Edo State Police Public Relations Officer, SP, Nwabuzor Chidi, when contacted on the robbery incident, said he has not been briefed on it.

“I am not aware of it. I have not been briefed on it”, he said.

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