

3 shot as police, armed robbers exchange fire in Abia

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From **Okey Sampson**, Umuahia

Three people, one of them a cop, were in the early hours of yesterday shot and wounded in Umuahia, the Abia State capital, when policemen from the state command engaged armed robbers in a gun duel.

A witness said that, in recent times, the suspected armed robbers have been lurking around banks located on Bank Road, Umuahia, waiting for customers with large chunks of cash to attack. It was gathered that following intelligence information, the police, in the early hours of yesterday, ambushed the suspected armed robbers.

On sighting the police, the men of the underworld were said to have opened fire. Police responded and, in the ensuing gun battle, about three people were shot and wounded. Among the injured was a female health worker identified as Apollos Theresa, who was hit by a stray bullet on her head.

Another person hit by the bullet was equally a woman identified as Chimuanya Joy, who was shot on her belly. The third, a police officer, sustained injury during the gun duel and was rushed to hospital, where he was receiving medical attention. The armed robbers reportedly abandoned their red Toyota car with registration No. Lagos: LND 126 HC, and snatched another one with which they fled the scene.

Efforts to reach the Abia State Police command spokesperson, SP Geoffrey Ogbonna, was not fruitful.