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4 killed, 5 arrested, N6m recovered as armed robbers raid banks in Anambra

From Geoffrey Anyanwu and Rose Mmadubueze, Awka and DAVID ONWUCHEKWA, Nnewi
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Luck yesterday ran out on a gang of about 20 suspected armed robbers when five of them were nabbed by the men of the Anambra State Police Command shortly after robbing three banks in Ihiala town in the Ihiala Local Government Area of the state.

Also, the Police were said to have recovered about N6 million the robbers stole from the banks as well as their ammunition. Though eyewitnesses said the robbers killed four persons including two security men during the operation, the police image-maker in the state, Mr. Emeka Chukwuemeka told Daily Sun that the police did not record any casualty.



Photo: Sun News Publishing
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The robbery incident threw the town into confusion as people ran helter-skelter when the dare-devil robbers operating in a Hilux Jeep, a Mitsubishi L-300 and a Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV) shot sporadically in the air after robbing the banks. The robbers were said to have used dynamite to blow up the banks' strong rooms, destroying their systems including computers and carted away millions of naira.

Though the robbers succeeded in their operations in the banks, their joy and victory were short-lived when in an attempt to show off their bravery by stopping at the Nkwo Ogbe market in the town and spraying naira notes, a combined team of the police and army swooped on them and engaged them in a shootout. In the process, two persons were allegedly killed while five of the robbers were arrested and their loots and ammunitions recovered.

The Police image-maker, Mr. Chukwuemeka confirmed that seven AK47 rifles, two general purpose machine guns and two rocket propelled grenade were recovered from the gang.

He, however, told Daily Sun that the amount recovered was not yet known as they were still counting, adding that the robbers came from Port Harcourt and camped in Orlu in Imo State from where they set out for the operation.

"I am not aware of any death, police did not record any casualty. We arrested five of the robbers, recovered their ammunitions and the money which is still being counted as we talk."

Noting that the other members of the gang fled into nearby bush when the firearm of the police overwhelmed them, Chukwuemeka disclosed all the police formations in the state including Anti Special Robbery Squad (ARS) had been dispatched to all nooks and crannies of the state in search of the fleeing robbers.

He, however, assured the people of the state that the command was doing everything to ensure their safety, saying, "we are not leaving any stone unturned in making sure Anambra state is free again from these hoodlums."

The incident which lasted for over three hours caused human and vehicular traffic as movement was completely paralysed along the ever busy Owerri/Onitsha road as well as the Orlu axis.

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