



Again, 5 Killed as Robbers Raid Bank in Lagos

By Eugene Agha, 09.06.2007

The raid on banks by armed robbers, which has become almost a daily ritual in Lagos Metropolis in the last three weeks, continued yesterday as men of the under world stormed Ilupeju branch of First Bank.

At the end of the raid, about five persons, among whom are two police officers, were allegedly killed by the gunmen who arrived the premises of the bank in two unmarked buses.

But the robbers could not make away with any money from the bank.

The policemen killed, at the time of the attack, were on traffic duty at the Anthony end of the sprawling Ikorodu Road.

Police authorities in Lagos said the robbery was foiled by the timely arrival of a team of policemen from Ilupeju Police Division.

Yesterday's robbery would bring to five bank robberies that have so far been committed within the metropolis in the last three weeks. It also pushed the total number of death of policemen and civilians to about 10.

In other cities, the story is the same. Seven people were reportedly killed last Thursday when armed robbers attacked a branch of United Bank of Africa (UBA) opposite Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria and carted away large sums of money.

Though, the Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Mohammed Abubakar, has constantly maintained that the command has zero tolerance for robbery and all forms of criminalities in the state. But crime reports have shown that robbers attack banks, at least once in every week in the last three months.

Though, the police said in its report that the two officers that were shot at yesterday only sustained severe bullet wounds and were presently being treated in an unknown hospital in Lagos, an unconfirmed report from some eyewitnesses alleged that the two policemen died instantly from the gun shot injuries.

The eyewitnesses said the policemen were taken unawares by the robbers.

They claimed that the bandits were actually running away from the bank following the arrival of some policemen.

The other two unidentified victims were said to be passers-by who were hit by stray bullet fired by the robbers as they fled from the scene of crime.

According to the sources, the robbers fired sporadically into the air as they drove dangerously through the ever-busy Ikorodu Road to make way for their escape.

Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Mr. Olubode Ojajuni, who confirmed the robbery attack to THISDAY on phone last night later admitted that one of the policemen died following the severe bullet wounds he sustained.

Ojajuni, a Superintendent of Police (SP0), said the police were able to foil the bank robbery following an information that was received at the Command Headquarters, Ikeja. He said on receipt of the information, a team of policemen was detailed to the scene.

"The timely arrival of the policemen prevented the robbers from entering the banking hall. They escaped through Ikorodu Road. They sighted some policemen who were on traffic duty as they drove off towards Anthony. They opened fire on the officers killing one on the spot. No arrest or recovery has been made but police are on the trail of the fleeing gunmen," he added.