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# Armed Bandits Attack Bureau de Change at MMA

By Chinedu Eze, 07.31.2007

Armed robbers on Sunday night broke into the bureau de change located at the local wing of the Murtala Mohammed Airport (MMA), Lagos, killing a man that was later identified as a lunatic, severely wounded a policeman and siezed the rifle of another policeman, who was among the three security personnel at the building.



The obnoxious efforts of the robbers who were about 50 in number came to nought, as they were unable to steal monies from the shops because of the bureau operators' new method of not leaving cash over night.

The robbers destroyed the shops in order to gain entry, and were confronted by the combined team of policemen drawn from MMA and State Police Command who battled them to a standstill, after more than one hour of futile operation, forcing them to take to their heels.

Eye-witness account said the armed robbers stormed the area by by 3.00 a.m. and operated till about 4.00 a.m., when they were confronted by the police. Police sources disclosed that among things recovered from the robbers were huge cartons of live ammunition and gas cylinderamong others. Alledgedly used to break into the safes, 512 pellets of expended ammunition, and other hard equipment. One of the bureau de change operators located adjacent to Arik Air's office said the robbers could not get money from the big safes before the police came to dislodge them.

He stated that the robbers were still battling with it before the police came after a tip-off, noting: "They succeeded with the smaller safes but found nothing inside. The bigger safes proved too difficult for them to break into. Since the recurring attacks on us (bureau de change operators), we have learnt to keep smaller amount of money in our safes to beat the people to their game" There have been incessant attacks on bureau de change in the airport over the years by robbers who were never discouraged by the ubiquitous police, airport securities and the proximity of the Nigeria Air Force Base to the area where the building of the bureau is located and Sunday night's incident brings the number to over seven attacks in the past two years.

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