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Nigeria: Robbers Attack MTN Base Station, Kill Guard

6 February 2009

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Lagos — People believed to be armed robbers attacked a base station of Nigeria's leading telecommunications company, MTN, at Mogbo village near Abeokuta in Ogun State on Saturday, killing a guard and seriously wounding another.

This is the latest in the habitual attacks on the company's facilities which are often located in remote areas.

The armed robbery suspects vandalised the base station and carted away two giant power generating sets which provided power to the site. The armed robbery suspects also stole back-up batteries and other accessories found at the site. The development disrupted telecommunications services to residents of the village and its environs for many hours before MTN engineers were mobilised to the site to restore service.

The injured security guard, who received multiple machete cuts from the men of the underworld, is currently receiving treatment at a hospital, while the remains of the deceased guard had been deposited at the mortuary.

"Our thoughts and prayer are with the families of the security guards killed and brutally wounded in the unfortunate robbery incident," said Mr. Wale Goodluck, Corporate Services Executive, MTN.

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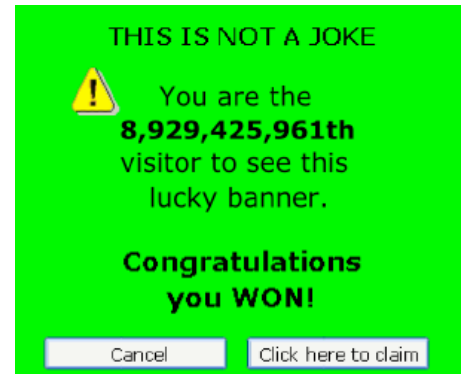
"We take adequate measures to safeguard the lives of people working for us. Indeed, we expend in excess of N85 million a month on security costs alone. However, the men of the underworld who went to the site were determined to forcefully carry out their unlawful intention. Security operatives have been duly notified and are currently investigating the crime", he said. Goodluck decried ceaseless attacks on base stations nationwide by vandals and other elements. "As a result, MTN replaces an average of 18 stolen generators every month, aside from air conditioners and other crucial equipment that are also stolen.

This is not helping the industry and has a negative impact on the quality of service. It is particularly distressing that the perpetrators of this crime can go to the extent of killing security guards to realise their illegal goals."

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