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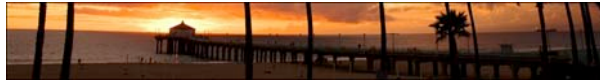
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THIS DAY

**Nigeria: Robbers Terrorise Imo, Kill 10**

Amby Uneze

24 April 2010

Owerri — Imo State recorded yet another unprecedented high profile robbery attack on Thursday as armed robbers ran through most of the banks operating from Orlu through Anara in Isiala Mbano Local Government to Okigwe, robbing and killing innocent people.

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As the dare-devil men were busy robbing the banks, they also engaged the police and army, and at the last count, ten people comprising four policemen, two military personnel and about four civilians were killed. The vicious onslaught by the hoodlums dressed in mobile police uniform

started in Ihiala in Anambra State where they were said to have shot policemen on sight at checkpoints on their way to Imo State.

Having shot and killed two policemen at a checkpoint around St Joseph Catholic Church in Orlu, leaving two others who had rolled under a stationary vehicle with multiple bullet wounds for dead, the gunmen proceeded to Owerri Nkwoji in Nkwerre council area where they were said to have attacked a bank, killing two policemen and a civilian who lived in the building opposite the bank.

From Nkwerre, the gunmen headed for Anara in Isiala Mbano council area of the state where what would have been an ambush by the police, according to a source, turned sour.

The source confided in THISDAY that Police had planned to confront the hoodlums at Anara but some how the gunmen were at the location before the police perfected their plans. The source said that the hoodlums were already waiting around the area where the Operation Festival's Joint Police and Military patrol outfit was often stationed, while police were bringing a tipper lorry to barricade the road.

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While the two policemen were coming down from the tipper, the gunmen opened fire killing them instantly. On their way out of the state, the robbers passed through the front of the state police command headquarters and the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency and shot repeatedly at their buildings.

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When THISDAY visited the Imo State University Teaching Hospital, Orlu where most of the casualties from Orlu area were taken to, the emergency unit of the hospital was literally besieged by concerned residents of the state who had come to sympathize with the victims and others who had come to ascertain that none of their loved ones were affected in the vicious attack.

The Army Public Relations Officer, Lt. Adamu Ngulde maintained that as at news time, he was not sure of the number of casualties the army recorded, saying they were still receiving reports and assessing the situation in all the locations the attacks occurred. A woman, who was apparently being treated for shock at IMSUTH, narrated how a female passenger sitting next to her in a bus was killed by a stray bullet.

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