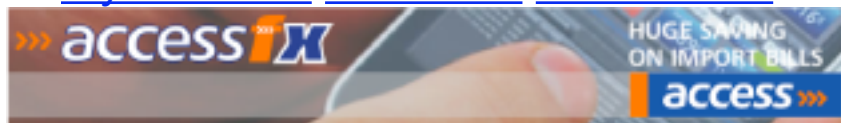


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Robbers Raid Journalist, Kill own Two Gang Members, Three Others

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Police Headquarters

Chiemelie Ezeobi

With Christmas barely nine weeks away, the spate of armed robberies is getting fiercer, as robbers not only organise mass raids, they have also become rather bloodthirsty. Last Saturday, no fewer than four persons were shot dead and several others injured at Anglican Road in Sango Ota, Ogun State when a 12-man armed gang stormed the area in the wee hours of the day. But as it would happen, the robbers erroneously shot dead two members of the gang, taken for residents of the neighbourhood.

The Ota area is said to be the new haven for robbers chased out of Lagos State. They (robbers) have thus carried out several operations within the area, sometimes even on the Lagos-Abeokuta highway, without as much a confrontation by the police.

In their latest raid, the armed gang stormed the street at about 1.45am and first shot the security dog dead to prevent it from alerting people of their presence with its barking.

Next, the gang attacked and eliminated the two security men on the street, Tunde Olejesu, and one Kolade Kehinde, after which they headed for the home of their victim, a former member of staff of The Guardian and presently a Director with Environment Rights Action/Friends of the Earth Nigeria (ERA/FoEN), Mr. Akinbode Oluwafemi. He was lucky to have escaped their bullets.

Speaking to THISDAY Sunday, the victim's colleague, Mr. Tunji Buhari, said the robbers stormed the house at about 1.45am armed with Ak47 rifles and other weapons.

Narrating what transpired he said: "It all started on October 12 at about 1.45am when some

heavily armed men, numbering about 12, stormed Mr. Akinbode Oluwafemi's house.

“First, they shot at our security man, Tunde Olajesu, at the gate to prevent him from alerting us. He was, however, fortunate as the bullet hit his hand and not a more dangerous part of the body.

“Wisely, he pretended that he was dead so they left him in a pool of his own blood taking him for dead. They stormed Oluwafemi's building, a duplex and shot Oluwafemi's brother-in-law, Kolade Kehinde, who lives on the ground floor.”

THISDAY gathered that Kehinde was the only son of his mother and had come to Lagos from Ekiti State to look for a job. Now his dream has been terminated by the hot bullets of a rogue gang.

Before the robbers could break into the house, the Oluwafemis, sufficiently frightened, had managed to contact a few persons to help them call for help. But none came.

Speaking to THISDAY on strict conditions of anonymity, one of the persons contacted said he put a call across to Mr. Muyiwa Adejobi, an Assistant Superintendent of Police in the Ogun State Police Command, at about 2am to alert him on the robbery and he promised to send his men but he never did.

He said: “To give him credit, he picked (his call) when I called him at about 2.00am. He promised to send his men but he did not. If he did, I am sure some of the robbers would

have been apprehended. In fact, till the robbers were done, no police presence was felt.

“It was even Oluwafemi and some people that went to the station to report the incident. It was only then that four policemen were assigned to follow Oluwafemi back to the house; a classic case of medicine after death.”

Meanwhile, the gang who had come prepared used an iron cutter to cut open the protector doors despite the assurance from the family that they would open the door willingly.

Tunji narrated: “When the robbers hit the door repeatedly, Oluwafemi appealed to them that he would open the door peacefully, which he attempted to do but he was forced to run back to lock himself in the toilet when the gang released hails of bullets into the house.

“Having succeeded in scaring them, the gang forcibly entered the house and dragged them out from their hiding places and demanded money, including hard currency.

“They robbed us, scraping off whatever money that was in the house. Not satisfied, they ransacked the entire house and made away with valuables like laptops, camera, four phones, gold, children’s cloth, shoes and even foodstuffs. While they were doing this, they sporadically released volleys of bullets riddling the walls, property and ceiling with hot leads.”

Tunji noted that it was after the robbers had left that they discovered the body of another unidentified person in the gutter. It was then they set out to the Sango Ota Police Station to

make their report.

With the four policemen, they returned and removed the body of the man from the gutter.

“When we lifted him from the gutter, he was clutching something in his hands. When it was forced open, we discovered that it was his prayer beads. He was praying when he was killed and thrown into the gutter.

“We used one of our cars to take him to the nearby mortuary. It was even later that we discovered that the gang had mistakenly killed two of their members,” he said.

Also speaking to THISDAY, a resident of the street who was simply identified as Biodun said the robbery was premeditated as the robbers did not visit any other person in the neighbourhood.

He said: “From all indications, the robbery was planned and neatly executed. First, they came with iron cutter, which they used to cut the barbed wires to gain entrance into the compound.

“Then they eliminated the security dog and the security guard before storming the house. Throughout the robbery operation, they were demanding that Oluwafemi bring out the money.”

Tunji lamented that the police were yet to come up with anything neither has any arrest

been made. As at press time, efforts made to contact the Ogun State Police Command spokesman were unsuccessful.

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of course the police will not come. it is a well known fact that robbers inform police of their plans and ask them to stay clear with the promise that they will share in the loot

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Muyiwa Adejobi, a superintendent of police is not Ota area commander, but as a police officer of repute he should make impact to get the victims rescued. The siren of two police patrol vehicles in that area around 01.00 am is enough to scare the armed robbers, he should be aware that this same armed robbers could get him killed if they are not arrested.

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The Police should acknowledge the fact that the armed robber that is left to move freely in the society is a danger to the public and to themselves. When a crime is committed, they should not rest until the culprit are arrested, if police decided not to combat the robbers during operation,



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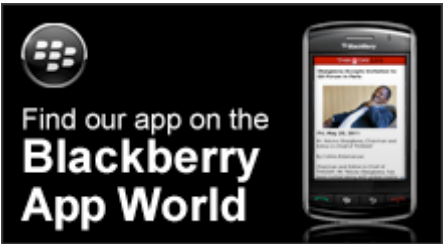






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