

# Robbers invade bank, kill soldier, woman

By Emma Nnadozie, Albert Akpor & Evelyn Usman

**L**AGOS — AN unidentified soldier and another middle-aged woman were shot dead in the early hours of yesterday by a gang of heavily armed robbers who raided one of the newly consolidated banks (name withheld) located at Coker, Orile-Iganmu along Lagos Badagry expressway.

Several others including a private-security guard who tried to scale the bank's fence were shot and wounded by the rampaging robbers numbering over fifty and dressed in military uniform.

However, Lagos State Police command described the raid as a foiled attempt and stated that there were no casualties. Over four thousand expended bullet shells were also reportedly recovered from the scene after the operation.

Sources said the robbers invaded the bank's premises located at the popular Awaye Estate in Orile through a canal around 2:00am. They reportedly came with many exotic cars including jeeps and opened fire immediately they arrived the

bank. Three mobile Policemen stationed at the bank narrowly escaped death by scaling the high fence of the bank when they were overwhelmed by the firepower of the robbers.

The daring robbers who reportedly did not cease firing later gained access into the banking hall where they released several shots and vandalized every property at sight.

*Vanguard* learnt that they increased their firing when they noticed the presence of a team of anti-robbery policemen from Orile Division led by their Divisional Police Officer, Supol Chinedu. Eyewitness account said the team of policemen had to make a quick retreat when they could not withstand the robbers' superior firepower. It was gathered that a re-enforcement of policemen from both the Command Headquarters in Ikeja, Federal Highway Patrol, Mopol 20 and 22, Anti-robbery team from Area C, Surulere and the team from Orile including the use of Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) could not deter the rampaging robbers who kept on releasing volleys of bullets indiscriminately.

Police sources intimated that when the shooting by the rob-

bers got more intense, the policemen had to lie low after expending all their bullets. The robbers reportedly taunted the policemen and challenged them to come closer using the walkie-talkies they seized from the fleeing mobile policemen. The robbers later succeeded in breaking into the bank's strongroom after making use of sledgehammer and other welding implement.

However, they had to beat a quick retreat when they suspected more attacks from the police by shooting their way through Coker axis towards Sanya along Oshodi-Apapa Expressway while at the same time releasing bullet shots in all directions in order to ward off intruders. One of the stray bullets hit a middle-aged woman who sells local gin at Coker bus stop and she died instantly. The army officer who was escorting goods from neighboring Cotonou in Benin Republic was said to have run into them while the operation was in progress.

He was hit by one of the bullets and he died while others who were with him escaped narrowly.