

DSP, 7 robbers killed in gun duel in Benin

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S SEVEN armed robbers and a deputy superintendent of police (DSP) were shot dead, while two persons sustained injuries during a gun duel in Benin City, after the robbers successfully attacked the Ikpoba Hill branch of the UBA branch and carted away over seven million naira on Friday.

The money was however recovered after the police overpowered the robbers suspected to be militants from a neighbouring state.

Though Edo State police commissioner, Mr Bala Hassan, did not confirm the death of the gallant DSP who was said to have been shot in the head, saying he was only in a critical situation and was still receiving treatment at the University of Benin Teaching Hospital, *Sunday Vanguard* gathered that the police officer who hailed from Kogi State died shortly after he was rushed to the hospital. When *Sunday Vanguard* visited the command at about 1:30 pm, yesterday, staffers of the bank were seen counting the recovered money while the bodies of the robbers dressed in army uniform were kept in a Hilux

Toyota pick up van. Hassan, who briefed newsmen on the robbery incident, narrated that the robbers came through the Ikpoba River in a speed boat but the police got a distress call that some armed robbers with sophisticated weapons had attacked the bank, stole huge amount of money and escaped in a waiting boat at Ikpoba River.

"So we mobilized our men including the State Anti Robbery Squard (SARS) and went into action. They came via the river; so what we did was to go to the bypass area to lay ambush. So there was an exchange of gun fire, seven of them were shot dead while one

of our men was shot in the head but his situation is very serious. He is receiving treatment at the hospital," he stated.

The commissioner explained: "Our happiness is that the stolen money was recovered intact. But it is very sad that one of us was seriously injured. He is a gallant officer. The robbers came from a neighbouring state; infact they were escaping through the Abraka road when they met their waterloo. We want to use this opportunity to sound a note of warning that this state is not a haven for criminals, we are determined to ensure that every citizen of this state moves around freely".

The fire arms recovered from the criminals included two pump action guns, AK49 rifle, a sub-machine gun with chain bullet 7.2mm and some substances suspected to be charm.

A senior manager of the bank, Mr Suleiman Amiju, who confirmed to newsmen that two of its staff were wounded when the robbers attacked, commended the police for what he described as "their gallantry in war. I still cannot believe that the police were able to crush these people inspite of the sophisticated weapons they came with. I am still shocked but we have God and the police to thank".