

Policeman killed in foiled bank robbery in Enugu

By Tony Edike

ENUGU—A gang of armed robbers on Monday shot dead a policeman and wounded another in a foiled robbery attack at a first generation bank in Orba, Nsukka area of Enugu State.

Sources told *Vanguard* that the robbers numbering about 30 attacked the bank at about noon while normal banking operations were in progress but were resisted by the two mobile policemen guarding the premises.

On arrival at the bank's premises, it was learnt, the heavily armed bandits driving in two unmarked buses released several shots into the air causing a stir within the area as people including staff and customers of the bank scampered for safety.

But the two policemen were said to have summoned courage to confront them leading to an exchange of fire which eye-witnesses said lasted for about 30 minutes. "The entire bank building was riddled with bullets fired by the hoodlums who were armed to the teeth, but the two policemen proved themselves as brave officers as they engaged them in a shoot-out, which forced them to leave the bank," the source said.

However, one of the policemen was shot dead in the encounter while his colleague who also sustained serious bullet wounds was rushed to a hospital in Nsukka.

It was learnt that the resistance put up by the policemen prevented the bank robbers from gaining entry into the bank's vault as they hurriedly left the scene but an unspecified sum of money was said to have been collected from the cashiers on the counter and few customers who had come to make deposits.

The State Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Mike Abattam confirmed the incident yesterday saying the two policemen on duty gave the robbers serious fight even though one of them fell to the firepower of the bandits, who he said were

armed with sophisticated weapons.

According to him, many of the robbers were wounded but were rescued by their colleagues who dragged them into the buses and fled. He said that the wounded policeman is now being treated.

"The robbers were 30 in number and they drove in two buses to the bank and our men gave them a fight which foiled the robbery, but unfortunately one of our men died in the encounter while another was wounded. Many of the robbers were wounded but they were taken away by their colleagues," he said.

Imo elders appeal to Yar'Adua on ministerial slot

By Chidi Nkwopara

OWERRI—SOME elders from Okigwe senatorial zone of Imo State have appealed to President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, to transfer the ministerial slot of the state to Orlu senatorial zone "in the spirit of equity, justice and fairness".

Addressing a news conference in Owerri, the Chairman of Odimma Okigwe

Elders Forum, Dr. Eleazor Madu, similarly argued that "since Okigwe zone has produced the current Governor, Chief Ikedi Ohakim, while Owerri zone has produced three ministers in Olusegun Obasanjo's administration, it was only proper for an Orlu man to be the current minister".

According to the Chairman of the Forum, "doing just this was the only way the peaceful co-existence in Imo state would be sustained". He recalled with glee that Orlu with 12 out of the 27 local