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## Five policemen feared dead, others wounded as robbers attack bullion van in Anambra

Written by Vincent Ujumadu  
Thursday, 18 September 2008

NO fewer than five policemen were feared dead yesterday in Anamabra State when dare-devil armed robbers numbering about 20 attacked a bullion van and security men conveying money from Onitsha to Awka at Awkuzu in Oyi local government area of the state and carted away millions of naira in the van. It was the second day-time high profile armed robbery in the state in two months.

The bullet-proof bullion van had left Onitsha at about 10.30 am and was heading to Awka when, unknown to the conveyers, the robbers had waylaid them at a point close to Awkuzu junction.

An eye witness told Vanguard that the robbers fired at the convoy and this forced the two patrol vehicles accompanying the bullion van to run into the headquarters of the State Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) located at Awkuzu, a few meters away, only for the robbers to chase them into the premises where an exchange of fire took place, leaving in its wake, several people dead and many others, mainly police men injured.

While the shooting was going on, the driver of the bullion van tried to speed to Awka through the expressway, but was caught up by the robbers in a four-wheel Toyota landcruiser a few meters to Igbariam junction.

It was not clear what happened to the driver of the bullion van, but the robbers used weilding machines to break into the van and brought out the cash boxes which were also opened with the aid of the weilding machines. For about two hours, the robbers blocked both sides of the Enugu-Onitsha expressway and carefully opened the boxes and removed all the money in them.

Motorists on the ever-busy expressway had to abandon their vehicles and the passengers ran into the bush where stray bullets hit some of them. The numerous check points along the express way were deserted as soon as the robbery began, while policemen at the SARS office ran into the bush.

When Vanguard got to the scene at about 2.30 pm, the bullion van and the Toyota jeep riddled with bullets were still there. The weilding machines and gas cylinders abandoned by the robbers were also there. There were expended bullets and posters of a political party in the jeep, which was an indication that it might have been snatched from its owner. About 32 empty boxes also littered the scene.

It was gathered that after helping themselves with the money, the robbers turned back towards Awkuzu and shot sporadically when they got to the headquarters of SARS again before heading towards Aguleri in Anambra East local government area.

It was not possible to confirm the actual number of casualties at press time, although the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Mr. Amusa Bello said in a telephone interview that only one police officer lost his life, while few others

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were injured.

According to him, “The true position is that one police man lost his life while some others got injured but I can tell you now that seven of the robbers have died in the police custody. That is the true position right now.

“I can equally tell you that we are not resting on our oars until we track down those criminals and you know we are capable of doing it. Right now, all the police formations in this state have been directed to get to the root of this ugly incident”. Two months ago, some armed robbers, ran amok in Anambra State after robbing a bank in Imo State and engaged policemen in a shoot out at Nimo in Njikoka local government area.

During that incident, three Assistant Superintendents of Police (ASP) including the one in charge of SARS at Awka Central Police Station and four civilians, including a woman, lost their lives.

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1

#### Insecurity in our polity.

Written by [Isaac Mgbo.](#), on 18-09-2008 11:18 , IP: 78.152.221.195

I simply call this inhuman treatment from a bunch of heartless Nigerians to fellow Nigerians. It is only in Nigeria that armed robbers are this deadly, otherwise i can not understand why they have indulge in the killing of their fellow brothers all in the name of making money.

Nigeria has the highest number of robbery in the world, and yet the government finds it difficult to properly equip the police force, how on earth can the police run for robbers. The government should equip the police properly, provide the needed insurance, and increase their take home in order to give them the confidence required in the discharge of their duties.

The Nigerian youth is not empowered, and the high level corruption in the polity will not allow even development to spread, this brings the Nigerian youth in no other option but the use of the gun.

The police should do all within their powers to track the fleeing robbers and bring them to book. The police should remember that an armed robber who is released on bail after collecting money from them, tends to come back and waylaid them on the road.

The number of police men killed by robbers should be of great concern to the government of Nigeria and any government that can not guarantee the safety of its citizens, are not worthy to rule.

Armed robbers to block the ever busy Enugu Onitsha expressway for over two hours without a serious reinforcement from the police tells us all how equip the police are.

The robbery incidence is a daily occurrence in all the federal high ways in Nigeria, especially the Lagos Ibadan expressway, and the Lagos Benin high way. People are robbed daily, and there is no end in sight.

The government should equip the police more, or rededicate all recovered looted funds in equipping the police force.

2

### Police De lie

Written by [Joe](#), on 18-09-2008 19:14 , IP: 208.78.63.228

Mr. Amusa Bello should tell us how those 'seven robbers' died.

If they ever challenged the men at all, why did the helpless bullion driver have to leave the popular Awkuzu SARS office with 3 armoured personnel carrier (APC) to risk his life by heading to Awka when the robbers were raining bullets on him. Every person in Anambra knows how these SARS people kill both untried and innocent people detained in their custody.

The only way they can clear their shame this time is to kill people they have in detention and label them robbers.

Throughout yesterday, it was known to anybody that lives close to Awkuzu or Awka that these robbers were having a field day without any form of challenge from the police. How then can they tell us that SEVEN of the robbers have died.

Who killed them?

How were they killed?

When were they killed?

IG of Police should look into this issue very well because we all witnessed it.

3

### Armed robbery of yesterday Awuku

Written by [Okorie Fidelis](#), on 18-09-2008 19:22 , IP: 83.229.101.68

I would like to hear from CSP of police in charge of SARS Anambra State for the three Armoured APC packed at their during the operation, why there were not used at least an attempt.

”

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