

Policeman, 3 suspected robbers killed in Ondo robbery

●4 other suspects arrested in Edo

BY DAYO JOHNSON

AKURE—A Mobile Police officer and three suspected armed robbers were yesterday killed after no fewer than 20 armed robbers invaded a first generation bank in Owo area of Ondo State.

Vanguard gathered they were killed during a gun battle that lasted over one hour in Ifon, Ose Council area of the state and Sabogida-Ora in Edo State.

Four of the hoodlums were however arrested at Sabogida Ora, Edo State by the Anti robbery squad from Ondo state who pursued the fleeing robbers from Owo in Ondo State to Edo state.

The hoodlums were said to have arrived the bank at about 11am in two Toyota buses and immediately started shooting sporadically into the air.

Their shooting caused pandemonium in the ancient town of Owo as people ran helter shelter while parents rushed to their children schools to pick them.

Market women were said to have fled to different directions and departmental stores hurriedly shut their doors to customers following the sound of gunshot.

Vanguard gathered that the robbers forced their way to the vault of the bank and succeeded in carting away huge sums of money after holding both the bank officials and their customers' hostage at gunpoint.

It was gathered that as soon as the hoodlums left the bank, the policemen who got wind of the

robbery went after them from Owo to Ipele junction where they engaged the robbers in a gun duel.

The Mobile police corporal was said to have been felled by the bullet of the hoodlums.

Angered by the death of their colleague, the Police were said to have pursued the fleeing hoodlums to

Sabogida Ora in Edo state where one of the Toyota buses was recovered and three of them shot died.

Another was also said to have been seriously injured in the process.

As news of the robbery in Owo spread to Akure, the state capital, banks hurriedly closed shop.

Customers who were already transacting business in the banks were sent packing and the banks workers left the counters for the rooms in the banks.

The Police confirmed that undisclosed sum of money was in bus recovered from the hoodlums in Edo State.

Pan Yoruba Confab: Why we must speak with one voice—Yoruba leaders

BY BASHIR ADEFAKA

IKENNE—EMINENT people across the six Yoruba states of the Southwest gathered for the "First Pan-Yoruba Conference", which was held at the Efunyela Hall in the premises of late Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Ikenne, Ogun State yesterday, to take stock and chart the way forward.

The leaders, who were unanimous that disunity is the bane of the race, called on all Yoruba sons, daughters and elders, both in and outside governments, to sheath their swords and reunite for the race to move forward.

Declaring the conference open, the Ooni of Ife, Oba Okunade Sijuwade, and co-convenor of the conference, said in his speech that, "My duty here today is to appeal to all our Yoruba people; both old and young, politicians and non-politicians to come together like children of the same family to examine the messy situation which we have found ourselves vis-à-vis

the rest of the country.

"If we have to start apportioning blames, we would not be able to achieve anything and those coming behind us will never forgive us; but by doing what I have suggested, we will have greater confidence and ability to forge ahead once more as a leading race in this country and with our implicit faith in the power of Almighty God who is the ultimate decider or all human destinies, He will give us our rightful place in the country."

Also speaking at the conference, which was coordinated by Senator Femi Okurohunmu, first Governor of Lagos State, Alhaji Lateef Jakande, urged the conveners of the meeting to ensure its continuity.

Jakande who, like other speakers, spoke in Yoruba language, said: "The meeting of today should be continuous. There are a lot of issues going on which necessitate that this meeting should continue. There is no talk about

Nigeria without Yoruba playing significant roles. Our own duty is to ensure that we don't draw Yoruba backward and the best way to do it is to be united," he said.

Governors of the Southwest, except Ondo State governor Olusegun Mimiko, who was represented by his deputy, Alhaji Ali Olaganju Olanusi were conspicuously absent. Absence of the governors and former Alliance for Democracy, AD, governors were not taken lightly, but Alhaji Lateef Jakande, said they could be given excuse since the meeting would still be coming up again.

Present at the meeting were Ooni of Ife, Oba Okunade Sijuwade; wife of late Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Mama H.I.D. Awolowo; former Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Chief Olu Falae; Afenifere Leader, Chief Reuben Fashoranti, former Chief of General Staff, Lieutenant General Oladipo Dipo, Chief Ayo Adebajo and others.