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# Robbers on rampage in Kwara

•kill 3, sack police station, shut down banks

BY DEMOLA AKINYEMI,  
ILORIN

**T**HE sporadic gun shots from men of the under world Tuesday, rattled residents of the ancient town of Omuaran in Irepodun Local Government area of Kwara State. The robbers, numbering over 20 and armed with sophisticated weapons, attacked three banks and killed three persons: a member of a vigilante group and two others.

Investigation by *Crime Guard* revealed that the robbers apparently struck with a laid down plan. For instance, they were discovered to have arrived the town 24-hours before the operation.

Findings by *Crime Guard* revealed that they lodged in a nearby hotel, in preparation for their deadly mission, Monday. The following day (Tuesday) they reportedly left the hotel. Their first port of call as gathered, was a Police division in Alakata, not too far from Aperan Road where some banks are situated. The bandits reportedly attacked the policemen at the station, deflated every mobile vehicle in the premises and seized some of their rifles.

eye witnesses said.

After the robbers exit, youths of the town reportedly besieged Omuaran Police Division, blaming the policemen for not rising to the occasion. They reportedly hurled stones at the policemen, in the process of which some of them sustained injuries. Their action was however contained following the use of teargas by the policemen.

The body of the slain vigilante member, Dapo, was committed to mother earth Friday with the villagers coming out *en mass* to give him a historic burial for what they described as his rare display of bravery.

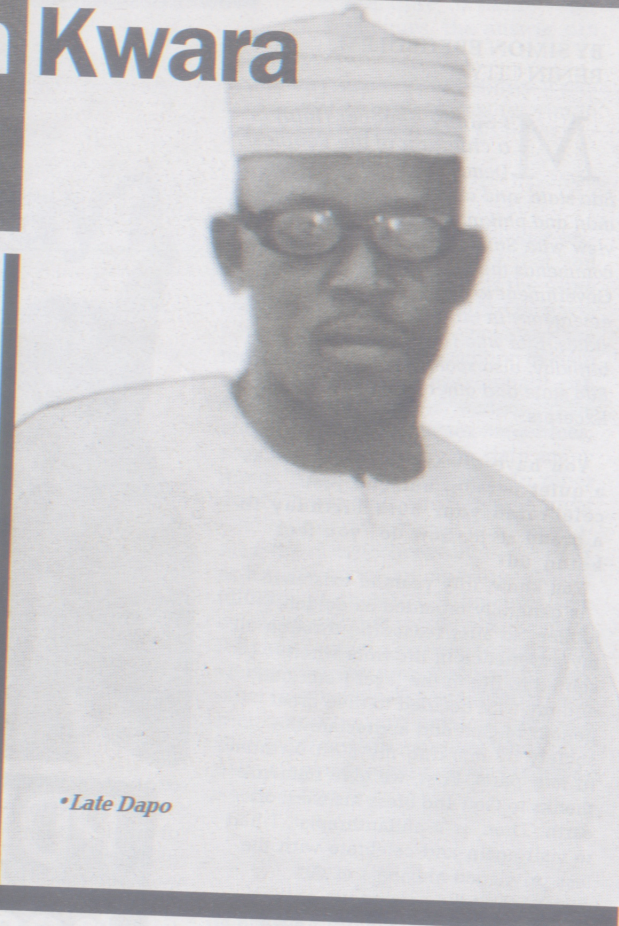
The Kwara State Police Command Public Relations Officer, Olufemi Fabode, confirmed the incident in an interview with journalists in Ilorin. He however, said that one AK 47 rifle and two explosive devices were recovered after the

robbers were repelled.

He said, "Three people died, including two staffers of Union Bank and one civilian. Also, four police officers including the Area Commander, Olatunji Ayodele, who sustained serious injuries on his shoulder were receiving treatment in the hospital".

He added that various security measures had been taken by the command to beef up security in the town. "Already, a team of mobile police officers have been deployed to the town, likewise a team of intelligence officers, to get useful information that would help arrest criminals in the area."

However, since the robbery attack, banks in the entire town have been shut down while residents are still gripped with trepidation, despite the presence of scores of mobile police men and intelligence officers deployed by the Kwara State Police Command.



•Late Dapo

## My life is in danger, woman detained by bank manager over loan cries out

•as Gender group threatens legal action

Conference And Exhibition, Nana Modune Onwodi has described



reportedly left the hotel. Their first port of call as gathered, was a Police division in Alakata, not too far from Aperan Road where some banks are situated. The bandits reportedly attacked the policemen at the station, deflated every mobile vehicle in the premises and seized some of their rifles.

While this was going on, other members of the gang were attacking some banks around the area. They reportedly broke into First Bank vault, carting away an unspecified amount. But they could however, reportedly not gain access into the vaults of Union Bank and Eco Bank during the operation said to have taken close to 20 minutes.

While the operation lasted unchallenged, a member of a vigilante group in Omuran, identified as Dapo Awoyale, reportedly attempted to face the robbers but was shot dead.

An eye witness told *Crime Guard* that "Dapo attempted to challenge the robbers before they started the operation. We learnt that he was warned earlier by the gang members who obviously knew his intention and capability. We learnt they told him that they didn't come for him, that he should stay out of their way. Dapo quickly left the scene only to be seen later. But he had barely disembarked from his motorbike apparently to engage the robbers in a shoot out than he was felled by volleys of bullets from the gang.

"The robbers thereafter, entered First Bank, where they gained access into the vault with the use of grenades and dynamites. At the end of the operation, two persons from the raided banks were killed"

devices were recovered after the Command.

## My life is in danger, woman detained by bank manager over loan cries out

*•as Gender group threatens legal action*

BY ONOZURE DANIA

MRS Rose Abbey, the petty trader who was allegedly beaten and detained in a Micro Finance Bank at Ipaja area of Lagos, last month, following her inability to offset N17,000 loan, has raised alarm over threat to her life and that of members of her family.

Currently, the petty trader and members of her family are living in fear following strange telephone calls.

The mother of four was allegedly detained for three days in the micro finance bank located on 170/172 Ipaja Road, after she defaulted in the weekly payment of N2,000 to offset the N17,000 loan. The Edo State born housewife was however released after a friend reportedly paid the weekly deposit.

After her release, her illegal detention was reported at the Gwong Estate police division where both parties were invited.

However along the line, she said, "the Divisional Crime Officer gave me a medical report to go to the hospital for treatment. While I was under duress, I was asked to write and sign an undertaking that I was going to withdraw the case and resolve it amicably with the bank.



•Mrs. Rose Abbey

To my surprise, I discovered that the bank manager who had earlier admitted in her statement that she actually detained me for three days, later denied".

Since her release, she told *Crime Guard* that she had been receiving telephone calls from an unknown caller threatening to kill members of her family if she failed to pay the money owed.

She further said she recently received a call from a police woman who informed her that the Divisional Crime Officer, Gwong Estate Police Station would like to have a round table

discussion with her, Tuesday.

A day before the appointment, she disclosed that manager of the micro finance bank accompanied by another staff went into the station and came out to where she was selling, bragging that she had got the needed information on her.

When *Crime Guard* visited the Police Station, Tuesday, the Divisional Crime Officer, DCO, stated that he was not aware that the victim was being threatened by the bank manager, adding also that she (victim) did not sign the undertaking under duress. The DCO asserted that the woman cannot withdraw the undertaking since she had already signed it, threatening that if she attempts to withdraw the matter, he would begin investigations into the illegal detention afresh.

When *Crime Guard* also contacted the bank manager on phone, someone who simply identified himself as Tayo, picked, informing that the manager was not around.

**Gender group intervenes, threatens legal action**

Meanwhile, the country representative, Gender Justice and Equity Initiative and event convener, Nigerian Women Transformation Awards

Conference And Exhibition, Nana Modupe Onwodi has described the incident as an act of jungle justice, calling for an urgent need for justice to prevail.

Onwodi in a press statement said, "it has come to our attention that a Nigerian woman from Edo State was abducted by a micro finance bank in Lagos, recently. The story clearly stated that the victim, one Mrs Rose Abbey who borrowed seventeen thousand naira from a micro finance bank at Ipaja, Lagos to pay back two thousand naira every week and has been paying, defaulted once due to poor sales. She was allegedly kept in the bank premises for three days without food or water. She was battered and was not permitted to talk to her husband or children. Can this happen in Lagos state? a corporate body? a woman? a mother? a wife? a Nigerian? These questions are indeed, begging for answers and we say its unacceptable. We, as a gender justice body, have therefore, decided to engage the services of a lawyer and will make sure social justice is done to the people who perpetrated this injustice to Mrs. Abbey.

"We want the world to know that this kind of thing can no longer be tolerated irrespective of whose ox is gored. Proper social conduct and due process must be practised in Nigeria," she stated.