

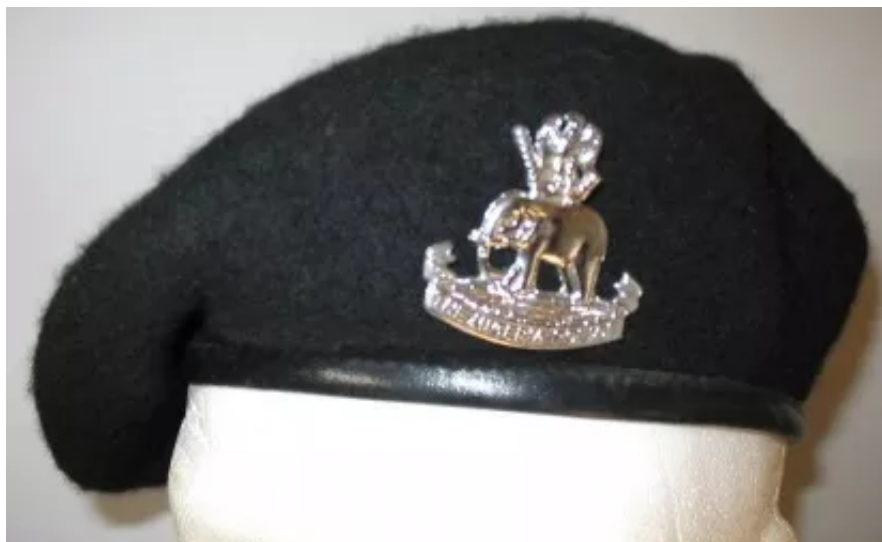
Vanguard

Robbers sack police station, kill 6 in Edo banks' raid

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By Simon Ebegbulem

BENIN—SIX persons, including two policemen and a private security man, were killed, Tuesday night, as daredevil robbers took over Igarra town, headquarters of Akoko-Edo Local Government Area of Edo State.



(<http://www.vanguardngr.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Nigerian-Police-e1443462278792.jpg>)

The robbers, who were said to be chanting Islamic songs, invaded Unity and Keystone bank branches in the town and operated for over six hours.

Vanguard learned that the robbers stormed the town in two Sienna vehicles around 6p.m., attacked the police station in the area, where they killed two policemen, before

attacking the banks.

Some of the robbers were said to have made straight for the banks, where they used explosives to destroy the entrance to one of the banks.

During the operation, the robbers, who *Vanguard* learned came from Kogi State, killed a private security man in the bank and three other persons, one of who was said to be a commercial motorcycle rider, while the others were customers that were in the bank premises to use Automatic Teller Machines, ATM.

The two banks are situated opposite each other along Momodu Ajayi Road in Igarra.

Residents of the area were said to have abandoned their homes and ran into the caves as the robbers turned the area to a theatre of war.

Vigilante men to the rescue

However, brave vigilante operatives in the area mobilized and barricaded their exit route along Ekpedo-Ekpe Road, near

the border with Kogi State and killed one of the robbers.

A leader of the vigilante group said: “When they started the operation at Igarra, we quickly mobilized our people from the surrounding villages, because the robbers came through Lampese, Ososo to Igarra and would also go back through the axis, passing through Enwan.

“We barricaded their route and a gun battle ensued.

“They were throwing dynamites and shooting ceaselessly. We killed one of them and arrested another, while many escaped with gunshot wounds. We also impounded one of their vehicles.”

Efforts to get the reaction of the state Police Commissioner, Chris Ezike, proved abortive as he failed to pick his calls.

However, *Vanguard* was informed by a police source that Ezike was busy at the scene of the incident yesterday morning.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Stanley Osifo, could not be reached at press time.

Vanguard, however, learned that mobile policemen had joined the vigilante groups in the area to ransack the bushes, searching for the armed robbers, who fled towards Kogi.

Some community leaders lamented what they described as the “porous security situation in the area, despite police knowledge of frequent invasion of the town through Kogi.”

One of them told *Vanguard*: “Policemen took off without mobilizing to face these criminals.

“That means we are not safe. If not for the vigilante boys, only God knows what would have happened. Maybe they would have killed all of us.”