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How we killed truck driver, diverted truck to Benin—Robbery suspects

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By Evelyn Usman

Two members of a notorious robbery gang that allegedly killed the owner of a tipper-lorry last month in Ketu area of Lagos in a bid to snatch the truck, have been arrested by personnel of the Nigerian Army.

The suspects who during preliminary investigation were discovered to have been responsible for some attacks and death of motorists along the Mile/Two Badagry expressway, were arrested at *Okada*, Edo State, while taking the truck to a ready buyer.

Vanguard gathered that the suspects identified as Jimoh Ismaila and Joseph Akinyemi, had been handed over to operatives of the Federal Special Anti Robbery Squad, at the Lagos State Police Command, for further investigation, with a view to rounding up other members of the gang.

Self-confessed leader of the gang, Ismaila, (32) disclosed that his gang usually took stolen vehicles to Edo and Delta states, where they were sold to ready buyers.

Blaming his indulgence in crime on his inability to carter for his family, Ismaila narrated the gang's *modus operandi*: "I know crime is not the best option but life's challenges led me into it.

I am married with a child but due to poverty, I could not pay my house rent. I had to send my family to my village in Edo State.

"A friend named Ibrahim introduced me to robbery. He had snatched a Toyota Rave 4 at Oko-Afor along Badagry early in the year and called me to help him drive it to Benin where we sold it for N800,000. I got N270,000 as my share.

"After that, I had been involved in snatching phones from commuters."

'How we killed truck driver'

Continuing he said: "On this particular robbery case, I had gone to see Akinyemi (his partner in crime) at Ketu when I saw the truck. I told him we could snatch and sell it and use the proceeds to start up a business and he agreed. It took us two weeks to plan.

"On August 13, when the owner of the truck came out early in the morning to go out for business, we attacked him, we tried to collect the key from him but he resisted. He brought out a cutlass from his truck and injured Akinyemi.

"I collected the cutlass from him and hit him on the head in self-defense. When he fell down, he was bleeding. I tied him with a rope before we left with the truck.

"We were however arrested at Okada, while taking the truck to Benin by men of the Nigerian Army who then handed us over to the Police."

On his part, Akinyemi, who is a private guard around Ketu, said he gave his consent to Ismaila because he had not been paid for two months.

He, however, said: "The plan was not to kill the man. We only wanted to collect the truck from him. We collected N11,000 cash from him which was used to buy diesel for the truck."

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