

Eight Suspected Robbers Shot Dead In Durban

Written by Rudi Prinsloo

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Eight suspected robbers were shot dead and a passing motorist, a bystander and a policeman wounded during a shootout in Durban on Friday morning.

Police spokesman Inspector Michael Read said the heavily-armed gang robbed the Chicago Meats butchery in Queen Street at 8am and fled the scene.

"After the robbery, the registration of the car was circulated on police radio when the car was spotted by members of the Durban Flying Squad in the Umbilo area."

A car chase ensued.

"The suspects opened fire on police and police returned fire."

All eight robbers were shot dead.

Witnesses told police frantic pedestrians ran for cover as stray bullets flew through the air.

"Shocked motorists also stopped their cars in the middle of the road when they saw what was happening," said a police officer at the scene.

"It is horrific. These gunmen did not care who would get injured... they just fired as many rounds of ammunition as they could."

ER24 paramedics spokesman Derrick Banks said the scene, at the corner of Maydon and Francois Road in Umbilo was "something out of a movie" with some bodies scattered on the road.

Three injured survivors -- a police officer, a motorist and a bystander were taken to a local hospital for treatment.

Banks said the motorist was struck in the chest by a bullet that passed through his windscreen. The bystander was grazed by another bullet.

The scene had been cordoned off as police searched for more evidence.

Owner Chicago Meats David Brandsma said the gang had confronted four security guards and the manager and robbed them at gunpoint.

As the gang fled the butchery, the guards and manager were able to get the car's registration number.

"They phoned 10111 and gave them the car registration details... and we are now informed that they were caught."

Brandsma said this was the third time the butchery had been robbed in the past six weeks. He was unable to confirm exactly how much was taken on Friday.

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No further serious injuries were reported.

Read said the gang had already been positively linked to two armed robberies in Umbilo. The car they were fleeing in had been hijacked.

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