

'Benue police kill 3 armed robbers

From Hope Abah, Makurdi

Benue State Police Command recently declared an all out war against criminals operating in the state with a stern warning to them to flee the state or face the wrath of the law.

The Police Commissioner, Chris Kato specifically enjoined those who find pleasure in criminality to turn a new leaf because his regime would rid all

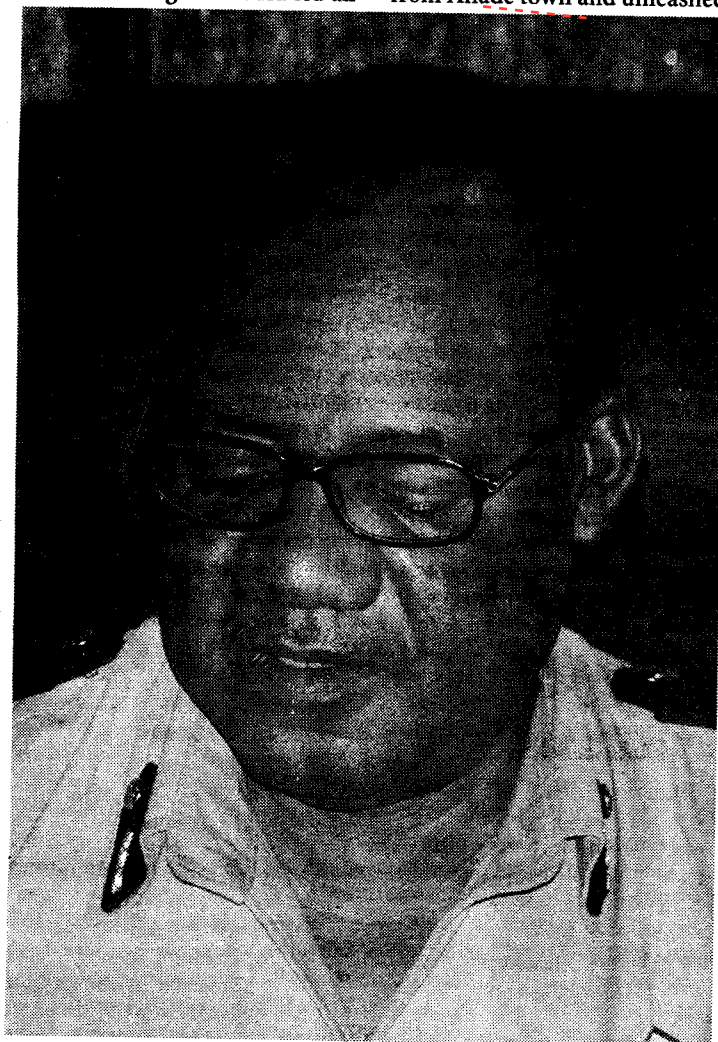
nooks and crannies of the state of bad elements in ensure safety of the people.

Last Thursday, the command gunned down three members of a notorious armed robbery syndicate specialized in robbing unsuspecting motorists on the ever busy Aliade-Otukpo highway.

Sunday Trust gathered that the gang had, at the early hours of Thursday, barricaded the Aliade-Otukpo road, few kilometres from Aliade town and unleashed



■ Ammunitions recovered from robbers in Benue State



■ Benue Police Commissioner, Chris Kato

terror on the people plying the route and dispossessed their victims of valuable items.

"The gang rode in a tricycle popularly known as 'Keke NAPEP' to the spot where they barricaded the road. Initially nobody thought they were robbers because they came in a slow moving vehicle.

"Suddenly, the young men started pulling out weapons with which they mounted a road block and robbed unsuspecting motorists.

"As the act went on, people started calling the phone lines of the Commissioner of Police and his command; luckily the

calls went through and in a short while the men of the Special Anti Robbery Squad (SARS) stormed the scene and a gun battle ensued.

"It was like a war zone; for few minutes there was confusion in all the surrounding villages as people scammed to safety for fear of being hit by stray bullets", a witness explained.

Police spokesman, Daniel Ezeala confirmed that the robbers engaged the special squad in a gun battle which lasted for awhile before they succumbed to the fire supremacy of the police.

"After the gun duel, our men arrested three of the robbers who later died as a result of the wounds

they sustained from gunshots before medical attention could get to them. But we are on the trail of the others", Ezeala said.

He added that dangerous weapons were recovered from the gang just as he maintained that the command would not rest on its oars until Benue state is rid off the shackles of criminals.

"The command has declared an all out war against violent crimes in all parts of the state, and I can sincerely tell you that we are not joking about it, because Benue will continue to remain very hot for any criminally minded person", he stressed.