

# Police kill 4 suspected bandits in Benue

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The police in Benue State yesterday gunned down four suspected notorious criminal gang members at Zakibiam's New City in Ukum Local Government Area.

Witnesses told our correspondent that the four neutralised criminal kingpins were allegedly foot soldiers of the late gang leader, Terwase Akwaza, popularly known as 'Gana', who held inhabitants of the Sankera area, comprising three local government areas of Ukum, Logo, and Kastina-Ala hostage for years.

The media aide to the chairman of Ukum Local Government, Timothy Vihinga, told our correspondent on phone that the police swooped on the alleged gang members at their hideouts in New City, Zakibiam at the early hours of yesterday, killing four of them (suspects) while others escaped.

"Four of them were gunned down while some escaped. The situation is very safe here. Those guys had been on the run because of confrontation with security agencies. This time, they just sneaked in, and security agencies, who had been on alert through intelligence, got to them and killed them," Vihinga said.

Confirming the incident at the police headquarters in Makurdi, where the corpses were later brought to, CSP Gberindyer Justin, who led the onslaught against the criminal gang, told journalists that they were killed by the men of Operation Zenda.

Justin also said the suspected bandits were on their way to attack a village called Gbagire in the area when his men, following an intelligence tip-off, tracked their telephone conversations and accosted them, killing four while others escaped with bullet wounds.