

## Police arrest robbery suspects, kill one in Imo

*From Charles Ogugbuaja, Owerri*

**A** CRACK team of police officers from the Imo State Police Command has arrested three bandits who specialise in robbery and kidnapping of the state residents.

Parading the bandits, who allegedly robbed a Catholic reverend father, yesterday at the command headquarters, Deputy Commissioner of Police in the state, Usman Gwary, who represented the State Police Commissioner, Aloysius Okorie, said one of the suspects died during a shootout with the police.

He named the arrested suspects as Uzoma Ibemere, 22, of Umuokpo Agbaja; Nwangele Local Council; George Izu, 29, of Umuochoko Ahiazu, Mbaise Local Council; Paschal Ugwulebo, 32, of Umuopara Obodo, Ujushi Ahiazu Mbaise Local Council; and the dead suspect, Chukwuka.

The commissioner alleged that the bandits, on April 11, snatched a Mercedes Benz Sports Utility Vehicle from Rev. Fr. Franklyn Odoegbulam of Matter Ecclesiae Seminary, Nguru, Aboh Mbaise Local Council of Imo State at about 7.30a.m. as he was heading for mass.

The priest told The Guardian that he warned his assailants not to dispossess him of the vehicle and other items, as they would be arrested.

However, the robbers ignored his warning. One of them even allegedly took the priest's T-shirt and wore it.

The police also disclosed that the bandits allegedly kidnapped one Kennedy Chimezie at Amaraku Isiala Mbano Local Council and dispossessed him of N58,000.

On a tip off, Gwary said, the police intercepted the suspects and exchanged gunfire with them.

Items allegedly recovered from the suspects, included one FMC rifle, one AK-47 rifle, 125 rounds of live ammunition in different calibres and two vehicles belonging to their victims.

The police chief said the command would not rest until all hoodlums were arrested in the state.

He said calmness had reigned in the state since the deployment of the Anti-Terrorists Squad (ATS) across the state's 27 local councils.