

# Police Kill Gang Leader, Rescue Kidnap Victim

BY IGBEAKU ORJI, Owerri

The Imo State police command has killed the leader of the 15-man gang that in February this year, invaded Naija Plaza Hotel, Oguta and killed the managing director, Chief Emeka Esieme and two policemen before taking away their service rifles.

Parading the corpse and the suspects at the command's headquarters, Owerri, yesterday, the state police commissioner, Mr. Muhammad Musa Katsina, said the command had arrested 14 members of the gang in February while the ring leader, Emeka Osueke, alias Ogbanje, escaped.

He said the suspect who was believed to be responsible for leading the gang that attacked and

robbed the UBA and First Bank in Orlu and Am-  
araku, respectively, last year and sometime this  
year, relocated to Lagos after the Oguta incident.

He however "sneaked into Owerri last night  
and converged with his recruits at a hideout in  
Umuatako, Ifeakala in Mbaitoli LGA where they  
were planning to attack a prominent member at-  
tending the women's August meeting."

"The deadly gang was sighted by strategic  
partners who alerted our nearby anti-kidnap-  
ping squad who engaged them in massive gun  
fire in the course of which the ring leader was  
gunned down while his converts fled the scene."

The command also rescued the wife of a tradi-  
tional ruler, Eze Basil Nwokeke from her abduc-  
tors "after a coordinated operation that lasted  
48 hours," the commissioner added.