

stances surrounding it.

weeks back.

Police smash robbery gang, kill one in Imo

**Fidelis Soriwei,
Owerri**

MEN of the Imo State Police Command have smashed a four-man gang of armed robbers which specialises in raiding filling-stations at Mbaïse and other remote areas of the state.

The suspects were arrested by a joint patrol team of soldiers and policemen on the Owerri/Umuahia Road in the evening of Wednesday after their latest operation at Aboh Mbaïse.

An eyewitness account had it that the security operatives killed one of the suspects in a gun battle and arrested one while the other two escaped into the bush with gunshot injuries.

It was learnt that the hoodlums, who were said to be operating in a V-boot Mercedes Benz 230, had earlier robbed a traditional ruler of his Nissan Trouper jeep at a filling station at Ahiara Junction in Aboh/Mbaïse Local Government area before their encounter with the security men.

Our correspondent gathered that the arrested suspect had been taken to the headquarters of the Imo State Police command where he is being detained at the Criminal Investigation Department's cell.

He was said to be assisting the police with necessary information to aid the arrest of his fleeing partners.

When contacted, the Po-

lice Public Relations Officer of the Imo State Command, Alhaji Isah Mohammed, a deputy superintendent of police, confirmed the incident in a telephone interview with our correspondent on Thursday.

He said the patrol team got intelligence report on the robbery operations in the area and lay an ambush which the robbers ran into.

Mohammed said the police recovered an SMG rifle with three loaded magazines, a locally-made pistol and "other offensive weapons" from the robbery suspects.

He also said that two Mercedes Benz cars and a jeep were among the items recovered from the suspects.