

# Mataveya admitted robbing, court told

## Herald Reporter

THE alleged MNR bandit now before the High Court admitted to robbing a store, a bus and being in possession of arms of war, according to warned and cautioned statements which he allegedly "freely and voluntarily" signed.

The statements were presented to the court when one of the State witnesses and a signatory to the statements, Detective Sergeant Joseph Tapera appeared before the High Court yesterday.

In one statement John Mataveya allegedly described how he robbed Davora Store at Clearwater Estate in Chipinge. There were three men at the store as Mataveya approached armed with an

AK rifle. He ordered the store-keeper to give him money. He left with the cash and goods after stripping the store-keeper naked.

"I am sorry for what I did. Poverty caused me to do this. I wanted money to buy clothes. I committed this offence alone," Mataveya is alleged to have said after his arrest according to the statement which was confirmed by a Chipinge magistrate.

In another statement Mataveya allegedly described how he robbed a bus belonging to Musabaeka 10 km on the Chipinge-Birchenough Road on May 11, 1987. On seeing that the bus conductor was delaying in coming to give him money, "I then fired possibly two shots," Mataveya said.

Mataveya allegedly admitted to being in possession of an AK rifle which he used in the alleged murders and armed robberies.

"I stole this rifle from Frelimo soldiers at Marideya

Keep at Gogoya in 1987," Mataveya allegedly said when the rifle was recovered.

The defence counsel, Mr Bruno Mugabe of Mugabe, Mutezo and Partners contended that Mataveya was unduly forced to sign the warned and cautioned statements.

He said Mataveya was not alone when he committed the alleged offences. He was with one Simon whom police stopped searching for when Mataveya allegedly said he committed the alleged offences alone.

Mr Mugabe also questioned why it took the police three hours to record one warned and cautioned statement in each case.

The trial is before Mr Justice Ebrahim sitting with assessors Mr Patrick Musengezi and Mr Misheck Nyandoro. Mr Ray Goba of the Attorney-General's Office is appearing for the State.

The trial continues.