

Abia uncovers 50 decomposing, 20 headless bodies in cattle market

By Bertram Nwannekanma

ABIA State government has uncovered 50 decomposing, 20 headless bodies around Lokpanta Regional Cattle Market in Umunneochi Local Council of the state.

Governor Alex Otti, who made the revelation during a media parley in Umuahia, expressed regret that the vicinity of the market had become a den of criminals.

He vowed that there was no going back on the decision of the state government to eject all residents out of the market.

According to the governor, the market would become a day market that closes in the evening and everybody goes home.

He noted that the ongoing campaign against insecurity in the Umunneochi/Isuikwuato axis was beginning to



CP Kenechukwu Onwuemeli



Alex Otti

yield fruits. He said: "My administration was poised to pay the cost of restoring sanity, peace and order in the region and the entire state. "No inch of Abia State, including where the bodies

were found, would be allowed to serve as a breeding ground for criminals. "Anybody still opposed to the government's efforts to sanitise the cattle market must be a criminal or an accomplice."

Otti added that his administration had introduced technology in the fight against insecurity in the state, and vowed to sustain the heat against criminals until total peace and security were restored.

"We have installed electronic equipment that tells us what is happening in every part of the state. "A few weeks ago, we found that a lot of ransom that was paid for kidnapping ended up somewhere around Umunneochi, and we decided to raid the place. "During the raid, we made shocking discoveries. In less than 48 hours, we recovered over 50 dead bodies around the cattle market in Umunneochi.

"We recovered over 20 decomposing headless bodies — men, women, children! We recovered so many skeletons of people killed.

"We also discovered that gunrunning, prostitution and so many things were happening in the market.

"So, we realised that the first thing to be done is to secure the market. We went

in and brought down many brothels. And we felt that the market, just like any other market, should be a day market, which starts in the morning and closes in the evening," he added.

Otti further hinted that part of the measures to boost security in the area was to convert the market to a general-purpose one and to fence it around, stressing that the fight against insecurity would not distract his administration from its development agenda, noting that the ongoing infrastructural development is on course.

"We also feel that those people hibernating in the market should go and live in the communities. We want to have a peaceful Christmas around Umunneochi and other parts of the state."