

# Police kill 27 kidnappers in Enugu

From Lawrence Njoku, Enugu

**T**HE police in Enugu have killed 27 kidnappers, including members of Auto Pilot, known as Unknown Gunmen, a breakaway faction of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) loyal to Simon Ekpa.

The faction had terrorised Enugu and its environs in shoot-outs with security operatives at various locations across the state in the past two weeks.

This came as residents of the

state appealed to the governor to invoke the provisions of the state's criminal code and demolish all the properties used by kidnappers and other criminal elements, saying it would serve as a deterrent.

Speaking at Ugwuogo Nike-Opi Road yesterday, Police Superintendent Onochie Ezeh, who led a joint security operation to rescue some kidnap victims, said the initiative led to the killing of a seven-man gang at Ogbeke Nike, where kidnappers used a large poultry farm

to hide their hostages.

He explained that yesterday's successful action was part of the state's sustained moves to flush out criminals operating from other neighbouring states.

"We have been on the trail of these kidnappers for more than three months. They had been operating within this axis where they kidnap their victims and keep them at a large poultry farm at Ogbeke Nike until ransoms are paid.

"Following a tipoff from