

UCHE NWOSU
UMUAHIA

Gunmen Kill Eight Traders In Abia Market

Gunmen on Tuesday night invaded the new Cattle Market at Omumauzor in Ukwa West LGA of Abia State, killing eight persons and slaughtering over 20 cows. Reports from the area indicated that the land where the Cattle Market is presently relocated from Ahiaudele Market in Ogbor Hill, Aba, had been a subject of dispute among some communities in Abia and their Rivers counterparts.

It was gathered that the gunmen who came there about 11:45p.m. on Tuesday shot sporadically, thereby killing some people and destroying many livestock and escaped after carrying out their nefarious acts.

Meanwhile, a high powered team of Abia State government visited the market Wednesday morning to access the situation and sympathise with the traders.

The team made up of the Chief of Staff to Governor Okezie Ikpeazu, Professor Anthony Agbazure; Commissioner for Trade and Investments, Chief John Okiyi Kalu; Commissioner for Homeland Security, Chief Sopuruchi Bekee; Chairman of Ukwa West LGC, Chief Okechi Kanu, and the Commissioner of Police, Abia State Command, CP Janet Agbade, assured the traders of their

safety while sympathising with them.

A statement issued by the Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Barr. Eze Chikamnayo, on the incident, said the government was "shocked and saddened by the mindless and barbaric act of violence that claimed the lives of about eight innocent citizens of our great country."

According to the statement, "We totally condemn

this dastardly act together with its wicked perpetrators. We're working assiduously to provide succour to the families of the victims. Those who sustained injuries are currently receiving medical attention.

"We have equally started the immediate relocation of the traders while working out compensation for lost properties. We'll leave no stone unturned to ensure that the evil perpetra-

tors are brought to justice.

"While waiting for the outcome of the ongoing investigations by our diligent security forces, the governor of Abia State, Dr. Okezie Victor Ikpeazu, together with all Abians pray for God to grant the families of the victims the fortitude to bear this irreparable loss.

"We urge all citizens of our great country in Abia State to remain law-abiding and promptly report any suspicious movement to the appropriate authorities."