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From Chris Njoku, Owerri

O fewer than four persons were yesterday killed as security operatives and some gunmen exchanged fire at Umua-ka community in Njaba council of Imo State.

Three of the dead were the gunmen while a fourth person was said to be a resident hit by a stray bullet as he placed a poster on a wall.

Residents scampered for safety while the gunfire lasted.

"The young man, identified as Obinna, was killed by a stray bullet while pasting burial posters on the wall," a source said.

It was not clear whether the stray bullet came from security operatives or the gunmen.