

Gunmen, soldiers gunfight leaves one dead in Imo



• **'No soldier died'**

A fierce gun battle between soldiers and gunmen in Ehime Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State has left one dead and many injured.

But the Army said only one bandit was killed.

The attack occurred at the Aba branch in Ehime Mbano about 9pm, sources told *The Nation*.

The source said: "Some non-state actors attacked and killed some soldiers in the area yesterday. The whole place is on fire, and troops have taken over nearby communities."

Residents fled in panic as shootings rent the air, creating a climate of fear and uncertainty.

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"We are terrified," said a resident, who wished to remain anonymous. "The sound of gunfire is still echoing in our ears. We don't know what will happen next. We are worried, Ehime used to be a serene environment, we don't know what is happening," he added.

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A disturbing video circulating online showed armed gunmen storming the Ehime-Mbano army camp, setting operational vehicles ablaze and chanting ominous battle songs.

The masked assailants, who identified themselves as “the angels,” gloated about their takeover.

“We are the angels! The angels are here!” they chanted. “The army has run away. Why are they running? They should stand and face us.”

However, the Army denied the killing of its men, saying that the gunmen stormed the Ehime Mbano Council Secretariat, but were repelled by the soldiers.