

Why Eke Ututu market was burnt — Uzodimma

John Kennedy Uzoma |
Owerri

GOVERNOR Hope Uzodimma of Imo State has explained why the popular Eke Ututu market in Orsu Ihitte Ukwa Local Government Area was burnt.

He said the place was discovered by security agencies as a haven for the production of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) by bandits and other criminal elements.

Addressing a press conference on Wednesday at Government House, Owerri, Uzodimma said security re-

port revealed that Eke Ututu was turned into a hideout for bandits and kidnappers who, not only compel the traders to pay taxes to them, but also use the market to manufacture IEDs with which they operate within and outside the area.

The governor said that report indicated that an Army Major working in the state recently fell victim to the IED planted at Eke Ututu as he was killed instantly after unknowingly stepping on the locally-manufactured explosive.

According to him, one of the bandits arrested at

their camp at Orsu Ihitte Ukwa gave the military hint about their mode of operation within the vicinity, including where they maintain shops for fertiliser and other gadgets at Eke Ututu to manufacture the IEDs.

Uzodimma pointed out that on the day the military went to the market with the arrested bandit, the Captain who led the team also mistakenly stepped on an IED that was carefully hidden at the place and in the process, he was badly injured and had to be admitted at

the intensive care unit of the Federal Medical Centre, Owerri.

Angered by these developments, particularly the loss of their senior officer and the wounding of another, the governor said that Armed Forces authorised a combined operation involving their men from Imo and Anambra states at Orsu Ihitte Ukwa, mainly the Eke Ututu axis and its neighbouring state of Anambra.

The governor said that it was in the process that the security agencies razed the market down.