

news

① Three feared killed in Imo clash, Army blames IPOB

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① A movie actor and indigene of Orlu in Imo state, on Monday, narrated how he saw security operatives allegedly shooting civilians during the clash between bandits and security men on Sunday in the area.

The actor who pleaded anonymity said that at least three persons, which included a musician, Rocco Nnadiokwe, popularly known as Ja Rule, a teenager and woman, were killed in his presence.

He said there could be other casualties, but three persons fell down in front of a hotel he lodged at.

He stated, "We were at the hotel, about to move out for our daily movie shooting which will be an epic movie that would mandate us to enter the bush. All of a sudden we started seeing people running into the hotel. I came out and watched from the window, the gateman closed the gate and the people remaining outside ran to different directions.

"As I watched from the hotel balcony, I started seeing soldiers and some other group of people

dressed in rough attires. Few minutes after they moved past our hotel, we started hearing gunshots, the soldiers were seen running back towards the hotel area and it seemed like they were being pursued by some other people. What caught my attention mostly as I lay down flat and watched from upstairs was that the people accompanied by

soldiers were shooting civilians as they were running backwards.

"The gun battle lasted for almost three hours. After everything settled down by 5 to 6pm, I came outside and saw people gathering along the road, and it seemed like it was the relations of the dead bodies on the floor, as they were carrying them one after the other. Just for the record, there were no

soldiers among the dead people on the floor."

The state police spokesman, Micheal Abattam, has yet to react to the incident as of the time of filing this report.

Army denies opening fire on Imo residents, says IPOB behind propaganda

② Meanwhile, the Nigerian Army on Monday said its

troops engaged members of the Indigenous People of Biafra and its armed affiliate Eastern Security Network at the Ihioma community in the Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State.

The Army said the ESN members were shooting into the air to enforce the sit-at-home order when they were encountered by soldiers.

The Director of Army Public Relations, Brig General Onyema Nwachukwu, in an interview with our correspondent explained that the troop in gun duel killed a member of the group.

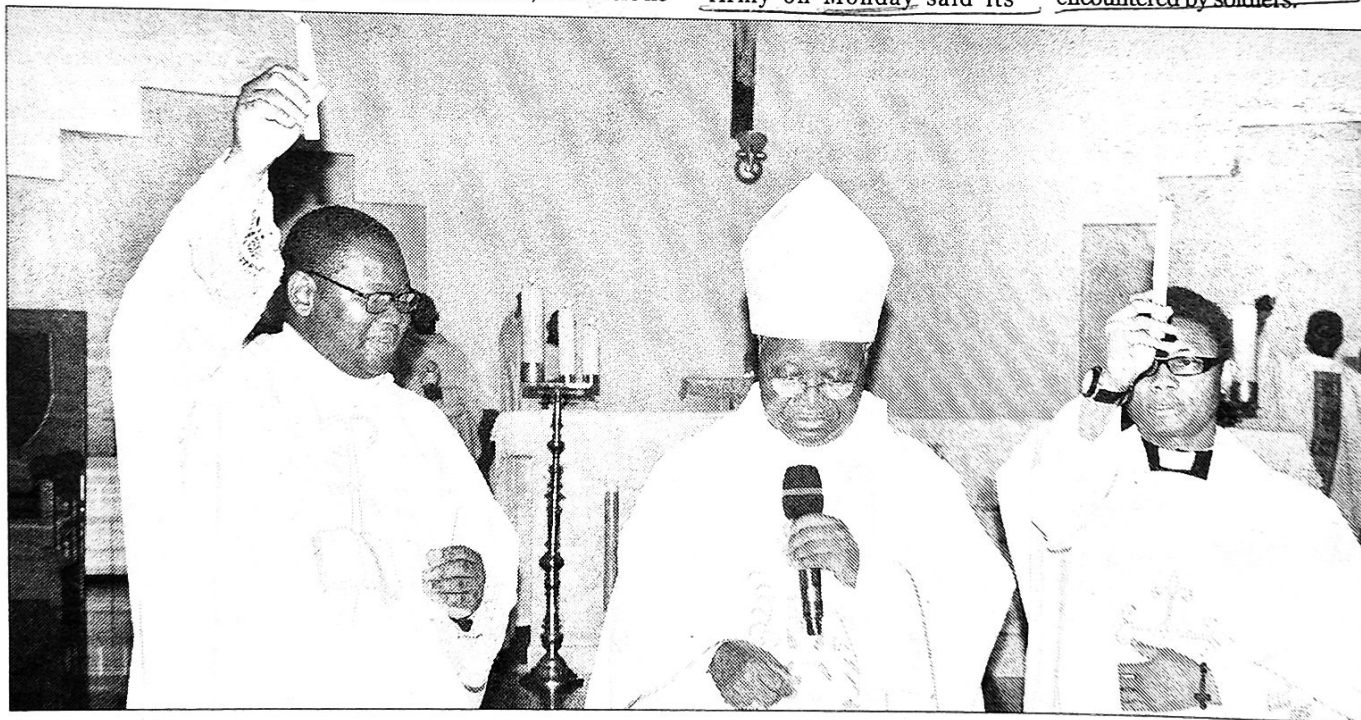
Nwachukwu stated, "Troops of the 34 Artillery Brigade Nigerian Army on Sunday April 17, 2022, neutralised members of the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra and its armed affiliate Eastern Security Network at the Ihioma community in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State.

"Troops on routine patrol encountered members of the irredentist group who fired sporadically at the Banana Junction to enforce the illegal sit-at-home order on law-abiding citizens going about their legitimate businesses.

"The IPOB/ESN criminals, on sighting the troops, withdrew and drove in a blue Toyota Highlander towards the Ihioma community for reinforcement.

"In the exchange of fire that ensued during the operation, one of the criminals was taken out, while others fled in disarray. Troops also combed the general area in a follow-up operation to track down the fleeing dissidents."

He accused the group of peddling falsehood after the incident, urging Nigerians to disregard it.



•L-R: Cathedral Administrator, Our Lady Queen of Nigeria Pro-Cathedral, Rev Fr John Jimoh; Bishop of Abuja Archdiocese, Most Rev Ignatius Kaigama; and Associate Priest, OLQN, Rev Fr Thomas Ariko, during renewal of baptismal vows at the 2022 Easter Vigil Mass at OLQN Pro-Cathedral, Area 3, Garki in Abuja... on Saturday. Photo: NAN

**AEPB to shut govt
offices, others
over N10bn debt**
Solomon Odeniyi, Abuja