

lish, Yoruba, Igbo and Pidgin languages to educate members of the public on the need to partner with the government to fight the menace," the statement added.

of them attended Arabic Koranic schools only. To them, begging is a way of life.

There was significant difference between the educational attainment of

imitation Centre, among other measures, is recommended as a lasting solution to the problem of begging and destitution in Lagos and in Nigeria at large.

## Child trafficking: Three dead babies recovered, 10 others rescued

Uchenna Inya  
ABAKALIKI

**E** Ebonyi State Government, yesterday, smashed a child trafficking syndicate that specialised in buying and selling of little babies in the state. It also arrested a female secondary school principal (names withheld) for allegedly buying two female babies from the syndicate.

The school principal was arrested in Uburu, Ohaozara Local Government Area of the state.

This came few days after the state government recovered three dead and 10 live babies abandoned by their parents.

The three dead babies were recovered around Mbukobe and Kpirikpiri areas of the state capital, Abakaliki, by the state sanitation agency (EBSEPA).

Speaking to reporters yesterday, the Desk Officer of the National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons and other related Offences (NAPTIP), Mrs. Florence

Onwa, said the suspects were arrested following a tip off that the woman was in possession of two suspected stolen babies.

"We went into investigations and discovered that the woman, who is already an elderly woman, had bought two babies. We discovered that she didn't give birth to any child and none of her relatives gave birth and where she kept the babies was not even in her late husband's house. She kept them in her sister's house, where we arrested them and recovered the babies, all girls," she said.

Onwa said that after weeks of thorough investigations, a crack team of the agency, in collaboration with operatives of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), stormed Uburu, where they arrested the school principal in her sister's house and recovered the suspected stolen babies.

Though the police prevented the suspects from speaking to our reporter, it was learnt that the suspect, who has less than five years to retire from the Civil

Service, allegedly decided to get the babies. She has intenede to use them as bait to get a share of her late husband's property.

Also speaking shortly after handing over the recovered babies to the authorities of the Red Cross Motherless Babies home, Nsugbe Street, Abakaliki, the Director Child Development Department in the Ebonyi State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social development, Mr. Igwe Godwin, disclosed that his ministry recovered over 10 children between September last year and now.

Igwe said among the abandoned babies so far recovered were two babies -male and female- whom the authorities of the home named 'Governor David Umahi' and his wife, 'Rachael'.

He said that David and Rachel Umahi were recovered by good spirited individuals in various parts of the state, adding that the babies were abandoned by their mothers in Imo and Ebonyi states, respectively.