

10 Feared Killed in Military, IPOB Clash in Imo

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* **Uzodimma imposes curfew in nine LGAs**

Amby Uneze in Owerri

Imo State Governor, Senator Hope Uzodimma has imposed curfew in nine local government areas in Orlu part of the state following yesterday's alleged killing of no fewer than 10 people in a clash between the army and members of Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB).

THISDAY gathered that members of the Eastern Security Network (ESN), a security arm of IPOB, allegedly killed a soldier and in a reprisal, soldiers stormed the area in their numbers, shot indiscriminately, and allegedly killed many people.

Several houses were also burnt during the clash.

All efforts made by THISDAY to reach the spokesperson of the 34 Artillery Brigade, Obinze near Owerri and the Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Orlando Ikokwu proved abortive.

To restore peace in Orlu, the governor said in a statement that he had ordered a curfew in some local government areas namely Orlu, Orsu, Oru East, Oru West, Ideato North, Ideato South, Njaba, Isu, Nwangele and Nkwere.

The governor who condoned with the families of the bereaved and all the victims of the unfortunate incident assured them that those who committed the heinous crime against them and their loved ones will never go unfurnished.

He said, "This afternoon, I received a very disturbing report on the activities of a group of militants who unleashed a shooting spree in the Orlu area of the state, killing and maiming innocent citizen in the process

"I am totally appalled by this sad report which appears to paint a picture of near breakdown of law and order in the Orlu area. The government condemns in its entirety this act of extreme hooliganism and brigandage.

"This is completely unacceptable to this administration. Those behind this callous barbarism will surely regret their actions.

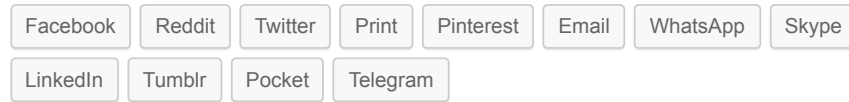
"Consequently, I have directed the security agencies to fish out without fail, all those behind the carnage and immediately bring them to book. Let no one be in any doubt that the perpetrators of this dastardly act will ever escape justice. I assure them that they will pay for for their cruelty against a peace-loving and innocent people.

"As an interim measure to immediately restore the peace in Orlu zone, a dusk -to- dawn curfew (6 pm to 6 am) is hereby imposed in the following Local Government Areas of Orlu zone; namely; Orlu, Orsu, Oru East, Oru West, Ideato North, Ideao South, Njaba, Isu, Nwangele and Nkwere.

"All law-abiding citizens are advised to comply strictly with the curfew as announced. Anyone caught violating the curfew will be treated as a suspect.

"The government wants to assure all Imo people that the situation in Orlu area is under control. Security operatives have been deployed on a 24-hour patrol of the zone. Equally, every security measure necessary has been put in place to ensure that law-abiding citizens can go about their businesses in the affected areas without any fear of molestation."

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