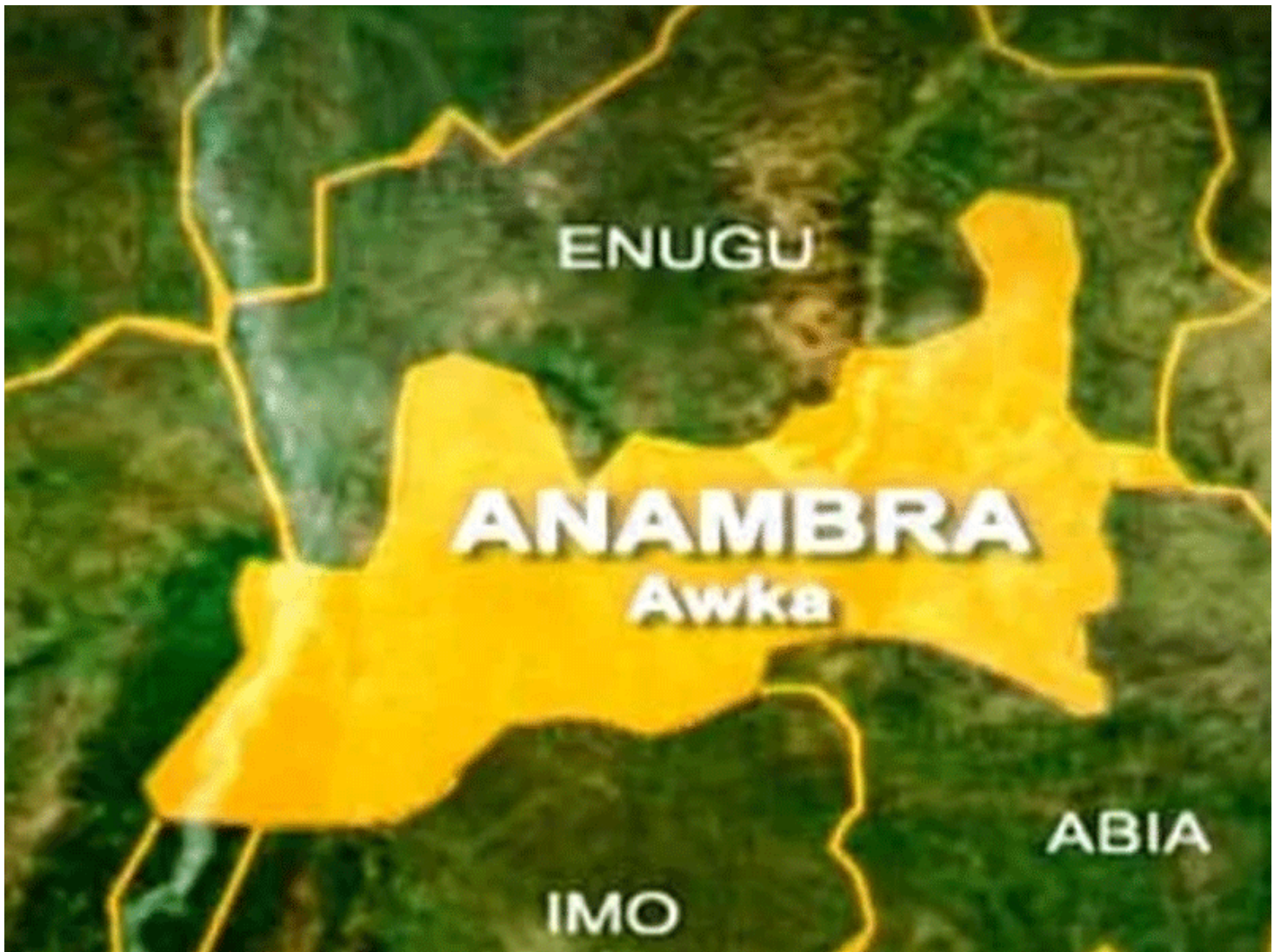


# Suspected Cultists Kill Scores during Traditional Festival in Anambra

NIGERIA | 9 hours ago



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## **David-Chyddu Eleke in Awka**

Tragedy struck in Nibo, Anambra State, yesterday, as scores of lives mostly youths were lost in a brutal attack suspected to have been launched by cultists.

The perpetrators, reportedly arriving in a black Lexus SUV, stormed an eatery in the community and opened fire indiscriminately, leaving a trail of death and destruction.

Indigenes of the community, mostly youths who were in the public celebrating the Onea Asat festival were gunned down.

The crime scene is a few distance away from the Governor's Lodge, where the state governor, Prof Chukwuma Soludo, resides.

According to eyewitnesses, who spoke to THISDAY, at least a 16 people were confirmed dead, with fears that the death toll may rise.

“It was like a war zone. The gunmen came out of nowhere, shooting everywhere. People were running for their lives, screaming and crying. It was chaos.

“They killed about eight persons in one location and drove to another close to Eke Nibo market, where more people were killed,” a witness said.

The motive behind the attack remains unclear, but authorities have been urged to launch a thorough investigation.

“We are devastated. How can someone do this to us during our celebration? It’s heartbreaking. We urge the government to take immediate action. We cannot continue to live in fear. We need peace and security,” they added.

Meanwhile, police authorities in Anambra State have confirmed the attack. The state police public relations officer of Anambra State Police Command, SP Tochukwu Ikenga, in a statement attributed it to cult activities.

He said: “The Command is aware of a suspected cult-related clash today 20/10/2024 in Nibo, Awka South LGA and the Commissioner of Police, CP Nnaghe Obono Itam has ordered immediate deployment of additional operatives to the area for necessary action.

“Preliminary reports of the incidents are still sketchy as the Command calls on the witnesses of this incident to volunteer information that will help to identify the perpetrators for possible arrest. Be assured that information sent in this regard shall be treated with utmost confidentiality.”