

# 24 HOURS AFTER BEING PARADED: **12 robbery suspects found dead!**

By Vincent Ujumadu

**UMUAHIA** — ALL the 12 armed robbery suspects who were paraded by the police in Umuahia on Thursday were yesterday brought to the Federal Medical Centre, Umuahia dead, even as the police said that the suspects were still being interrogated. It was not clear who dumped the bodies at the hospital and none of the hospital's security men could volunteer information.

The gory scene saw lifeless bodies lay in front of the hospital's mortuary. Hundreds of people in the state capital abandoned their businesses to have a close look at the dead bodies and some people were able to identify them as either boys from their villages or sons of some people they knew. The most pitiable site was the lifeless body of a teenager whose age might not be more than 14 years.

When contacted on telephone, the police public relations officer (PPRO) in charge of Abia State police command, Mr. Uchay Chukwuji, said that he was not aware that the suspects had been killed, adding that the only thing he knew was that the suspects were still being interrogated.

While briefing reporters on Thursday during which the suspects were paraded before newsmen, Chukwuji explained that the wounded ones among them would be taken to hospital for treatment. It was therefore a surprise to many people

when yesterday, all the suspects, including those who did not sustain injuries, were found dead.

The suspects were arrested during a gun battle with the police at Ohokobe Ndume in Umuahia North local government area of Abia State at a house the suspects hurriedly completed after running away from Aba following the heat put on them by the combined team of the mobile policemen and soldiers on patrol in the city

as a result of increased armed robbery incidents in the commercial city.

According to one of the residents of the area, the suspects had carried out an armed robbery operation and were sharing their loot in a quarrelsome manner which attracted the attention of the residents who immediately alerted the police who swooped on them. Four of the suspected robbers died instantly, while 12 others were arrested.

## **PDP will fail without me as flagbearer — Kalu**

By Vincent Ujumadu

**UMUAHIA** — GOVERNOR Orji Kalu of Abia State has said that the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) should forget winning next year's presidential election if it fails to give him the party's ticket for that election. The governor, who was addressing members of the various transport unions at the Governor's Lodge in Umuahia, assured them that he was prepared physically and mentally for the presidential race, adding that once the PDP ticket eludes him, we would win the election on the platform of the Progressive Peoples Alliance (PPA).

"I must contest the election and we will not tolerate any rigging. My generation is prepared to

make things happen in this country. Presidency is the turn of *Ndigbo* and we must get it, otherwise we take it that we are no longer wanted. The Igbo had been in the political wilderness for forty years and this is the time to be liberated and anybody who tries to scuttle next year's election is inviting another civil war in this country.

"By 2003, I started advocating for Nigerian president of Igbo extraction and now I want to be the president and I am working hard to achieve it. I had to come out because I discovered that many Igbo people are showing lukewarm attitude on the issue of president. Be assured that I have made up my mind about this race and I want all the transport unions to be part of it."

Kalu commended past Igbo leaders for their efforts to move the Igbo race forward