

Gunmen kill 18 in coordinated attacks in Imo

IMO State Police Command has launched an investigation into the brutal killings of 18 people in Orsu Local Government Area, on Sunday.

The attacks, which targeted several communities including Umukabia, Eziawa, Ihittenasa, Umuhu, Amaoku, and Amaebe, have shocked residents and drawn widespread condemnation.

● Uzodimma plans to engage ex-servicemen to protect assets

Reports indicate that the killings took place following the annual Masqueraders' Day celebrations in Orsu, where locals gathered to mark the festive season.

After the celebration, some holidaying residents went to a local drinking joint to unwind, only to be found dead the next day.

A source said, "All nine people in the joint, whether customers or attendants, were discovered dead, butchered with deep machete cuts."

A resident, speaking on condition of anonymity, "We were just a few blocks away, and nobody heard any gunshots or arguments. We suspect members of IPOB and ESN are responsible for this."

In addition to the killings at the drinking joint, three corpses were discovered in Umukabia, five in Eziawa, and five in Ihittenasa, all with similar machete wounds.

Expressing concerns over the wave of killings in the area, a former Chairman of the Nigerian Human Rights Commission, NHRC, and a native of Orsu, Prof. Chidi Odinkalu, took to social media to decry the sad development, calling the killings a "systematic slaughter" and highlighting the lack of response from

local, state, and federal government.

While the exact motive remains unclear, sources believe that the killings were intended to instill fear in the local population and force them to leave the area once again.

Orsu had been under the control of the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra, IPOB, and their armed wing, the Eastern Security Network, ESN, for years.

However, recent military operations have led to the recovery of some territories, with displaced residents slowly returning.

According to a police, "The killers

are trying to send a message to the locals, making them fear for their safety and abandon their communities once again."

As of now, the police have urged the residents to remain calm while the investigation continues. The gruesome killings have left the community in mourning and raised serious concerns about security in the region.

Reacting to the killings, Imo State's Police Public Relations Officer, Henry Okoye, said "The police are aware of the killings, and CP Aboki Danjuma has already set up a high-

powered security team involving different security agencies to unravel the case."

Meanwhile, Governor Hope Uzodimma of Imo State has expressed readiness to engage the services of members of the Nigerian Legion in protecting the government assets.

The Governor dropped the hint at the State's launch of the 2025 Armed Forces Remembrance Day/ Emblem Appeal Fund, at the Sam Mbakwe Executive Council Chambers Government House Owerri.

Abia Airport: We're on same page with host communities —Otti

By Ugochukwu Alaribe

U M U A H I A — GOVERNOR Alex Otti of Abia State has said that his administration is on the same page with the host communities of Nsulu, in Isiala Ngwa North council, over the construction of the state airport in the area.

Otti who stated this after a crucial meeting between the state

Orji, Abia ex-gov, demands retraction of story linking him to EFCC forfeiture

FORMER governor of Abia State, Senator Theodore Orji, has demanded that the story linking him to an interim forfeiture of N228.4 million and the fraudulent activities linked to Effdee Nigeria Limited be retracted in major national newspapers and on-line platforms, where the original report appeared.

In a statement by his liaison office, he faulted the reports, saying the publishers were out to tarnish his hard earned reputation.

He described the publication as "baseless" and "malicious," accusing publishers of spreading defamatory content without proper fact-checking.

According to the statement, among the numerous inaccuracies, the report falsely claimed that Senator Orji served as governor of Abia State in 2016/2017, years after his tenure ended in May 2015.

Further, the statement refuted claims that individuals Mr. Uchenna

Erondu and Mr. Austin Akuma were associated with Senator Orji's administration, clarifying that they had no connection to him during his time as governor.

The former governor also denied any knowledge of or dealings with Effdee Nigeria Limited, which the publication falsely linked to Senator Orji.

The statement demanded that the story be retracted in major national newspapers and online platforms where the original report appeared.

What I told Tinubu. Gov Otti —Sen Kalu