

General

IPOB
responsible
for killings in

Abia - DSS

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The Department of State Service (DSS) said it has uncovered the role played by members of the Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB) in the abduction of five men in Abia State.

A statement yesterday by an official of the DSS, Tony Opuiyo, disclosed that the five men - Mohammed Gainako, Ibrahim Mohammed, Idris Yakubu and Isa Mohammed Rago - were abducted at Isuikwuato Iga in the state.

The men were later discovered at the Umuanyi forest, Abia State, where they were suspected to have been killed by their abductors and buried in shallow graves. The statement mentioned that 50 other shallow graves of unidentified persons were also discovered.

The DSS said arrest and investigation conducted so far revealed that elements within the IPOB carried out the crime.

Opuiyo said: "It is pertinent, therefore, to alert the general public that IPOB is gradually showing its true divisive colour and objectives."

He said IPOB has been embarking on gruesome actions in a bid to ignite ethnic terrorism and mistrust among non-indigenes in the South-east region and other parts of the country.

"Following this act, tension is currently rife among communal stakeholders in the state with possibilities of spill-over to other parts of country," Opuiyo warned.

Opuiyo added that the Service would not hesitate to act decisively within its statutory mandate to ensure that the sponsors and perpetrators of the killings are apprehended and prosecuted for their crime.

The DSS also disclosed that arrested terrorist mastermind, Mohammed Usman, popularly

known as Khalid Al-Barnawi, was responsible for the bombing of the United Nations building in Abuja on August 26, 2011, and for several terror attacks in Nigeria.

Al-Barnawi, also known as Kafuri, Naziru, Alhaji Yahaya, Mallam Dauda and Alhaji Tanimu, was apprehended by the DSS on April 1, 2016, in Lokoja, Kogi State, while hiding under a false cover.

Al-Barnawi, the DSS stated, was a founding member of Boko Haram and later the Amir of the break-away faction, Jama'at Ansarul Muslimim Fi Biladi Sudan (JAMBS).

As Opuiyo described Al-Barnawi as a trained terrorist commander who has been coordinating terrorist activities in Nigeria, while talent-spotting and recruiting vulnerable young and able Nigerians for terrorist training by Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in North African states and the Middle-East.

The DSS fingered Al-Barnawi as involved in many terrorist attacks in Bauchi, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Kogi and Sokoto states, as well as in Abuja, in which thousands of people died.

The suspected terrorist was also said to be responsible for the kidnapping of two European civil engineers in Kebbi State in May 2011 and their subsequent murder in Sokoto State, as well as the kidnap of a German engineer, Edgar Raupach in January 2012.

Again, Al-Barnawi was allegedly involved in the kidnap and murder of seven expatriate staff of Setraco Construction Company at Jama'are, Bauchi State in February 2013, and the attack on Nigerian troops at Okene, Kogi State.

Opuiyo noted that Al-Barnawi would soon be taken to court to face charges after investigation is completed.