

# One shot dead as suspended Imo LG chairmen try to resume office

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The fisticuff between suspended local government chairmen in Imo State and the Interim Management Committees (IMC) yesterday claimed the life of one of the suspended councillors who was shot dead by suspected thugs while attempting to force his way into his former office.

The suspended councillor, identified as Ahamefule Maduabuchi, was shot dead at Umundugba, the headquarters of Isu Local Government Area (LGA) of Imo State as he was trying to resume duties.

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Trouble started on Monday when the suspended chairmen and their councillors across the state besieged the 27 LGAs headquarters with the intention of resuming duty.

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They had cited the Supreme Court judgement in a case between suspended Ekiti State LGAs' chairmen and the state government in which the apex court had ruled that the governor had no legal power to suspend duly elected LGAs chairmen.

But they met stiff opposition from the Interim Management Committee chairmen which led to a rancorous situation.

The chairmen, elected on the platform of the All Progressives Congress (APC) but sacked by the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) – led government, said that they acted in accordance to the Supreme Court judgment.

There was confusion in most of the 27 local government areas (LGAs) of Imo State.

In most of the LGA headquarters, including Orlu, Nkwere, Ideato South, Ideato North, Isu, Nwangele, Njaba, Okigwe, Isiala Mbano, Ehime Mbano, Obowo, Owerri West, Owerri North, the chairmen and their councillors engaged the IMC members appointed by Governor Emeka Ihedioha in a war of supremacy.

The suspended LGA chairmen and their councillors mobilised their supporters to the council, while the Interim Management Committee chairmen equally mobilised their supporters to various headquarters, leading to rowdy moments in the areas.

It took the intervention of policemen to restore normalcy in some of the local government areas, while teargas was used to disperse them in other places.

One of the appointees of the state governor, Kissinger Ikeokwu, said that the suspended chairmen did not gain entrance into the council headquarters but only resumed duties at the gates.

Special Adviser to former Governor Rochas Okorocha, Sam Onwuemeodo, said that the chairmen resumed work “In respect and obedience to the Supreme Court judgement to that effect,” adding that “the chairmen and councillors have been peaceful in their conducts.”

Police spokesperson, Orlando Ikeokwu, confirmed the incident. He said that the State Commissioner of Police, Olaniyi Fafowora, had ordered investigation into the matter.