

IPOB attacks: Wike imposes curfew in Rivers' land borders

From Victor Edozie (Port Harcourt) &
Nabob Ogbonna (Abakaliki)

● 2 soldiers killed, court razed in Ebonyi

Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Wike, has imposed a night curfew at all entry and exit points with Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa and Imo States as a measure to forestall further infiltration of killer gunmen in the state.

Governor Wike in a state broadcast on Tuesday said the curfew, which takes effect from Wednesday night, is necessitated by the recent security breaches and deadly attacks on security personnel by yet to be identified gunmen.

"The Government of Rivers State has decided to restrict night movements into and out of the state from the land borders of the state.

"Consequently, a night curfew is hereby imposed and no person or vehicle is allowed into and out of Rivers State from 8.00 p.m. to 6.00 a.m. from tomorrow (Wednesday) 28 April 2021 until further notice.

"We wish to advise that those who have any legitimate need or reason to come into or go out of the state must do so before 8.00 p.m. when the curfew shall come

into force daily," he stated.

The governor stated that security agencies have been posted to monitor and enforce strict compliance with the curfew at all borders, entry and exit points with Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa and Imo States.

He explained that on Saturday, some innocent officers of the Customs, Police and Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps on their duty posts along the Port Harcourt - Owerri Expressway were ambushed and gruesomely murdered in cold blood by armed attackers.

And similarly, on Sunday, the state witnessed another deadly attack and killing of officers and men of the Nigerian Army right in their duty post at Abua town in Abua Odual Local Government Area of the state.

The governor said although the security agencies were investigating these attacks with a view to bringing the perpetrators to justice, nobody yet knows where and when the next attack would take place.

"Neither do we also know the motives of the deranged characters or group behind

these senseless assaults on our state and the lives of security operatives working to keep us safe and secure.

"However, what is obvious is that the attackers and their sponsors are people who came from outside Rivers State, and as a government, we are determined to do everything within our powers to prevent the recurrence of such senseless and murderous acts aimed at creating an atmosphere of gross insecurity and panic among the citizens.

"In view of what is going on therefore and its implications to the security of the state and citizens, and in the discharge of our constitutional responsibility in that regard, the Government of Rivers State has decided to restrict night movements into and out of the state from the land borders of the state."

The governor urged all citizens of the state to be vigilant and report every useful intelligence or suspicious movements to the security agencies for immediate action.

He advised the people to understand that these are

strange times and nothing could be more paramount than their collective safety and security.

Meanwhile, gunmen have killed two soldiers at a military checkpoint in Afikpo North Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

Daily Trust gathered that the incident took place around 9 pm on Monday.

"The gunmen also carted away the rifles of the two dead soldiers," the source said.

Another source said when the gunmen arrived at the checkpoint, the military men stopped them for a search but they opened fire immediately.

The military is yet to issue a statement on the attack. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack.

In a related development, suspected hoodlums have burnt some parts of the Federal High Court in Abakaliki, Ebonyi State capital.

Two security guards sustained injuries in the attack which happened in the wee hours of Tuesday.

Daily Trust gathered that the hoodlums scaled the court

perimeter fence before carrying out the attack.

They reportedly used a petrol bomb to perpetrate the act.

The court library was affected while the security post was badly damaged.

Our correspondent, who visited the Court on Tuesday morning, sighted a detachment of policemen with three patrol vehicles positioned at strategic places.

Efforts to gain access to the court premises failed, as the security guards said the registrar instructed them not to allow non-staff in.

The State Police Spokesman, DSP Loveth Odah, confirmed the incident.

Odah said the hoodlums came in a large number.

She, however, said firefighters intervened and put out the fire.

The attack has caused panic and forced the state operatives to be on alert.

There is currently a campaign of violence against government establishments in the South-East suspected to be carried out by the Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB). The IPOB leader, Nnamdi Kanu, has vowed to avenge the killing of one of his top commanders.