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News | Nigeria

One killed, journalist, others injured as IPOB rally support for Trump

By Ann Godwin, Port Harcourt | 21 January 2017 | 4:39 am

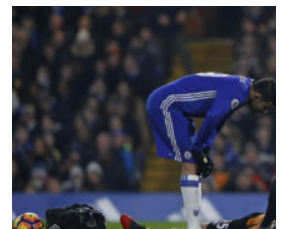


At least one person was killed yesterday and several others injured during a march by supporters of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in solidarity of the inauguration of the American President, Donald Trump and also to expose the plight of Biafrans to the world.

Also, a journalist with The Authority, Mr. Willie Etim was brutalized by some soldiers, allegedly detailed to stop the demonstration, while trying to take photos of the protesting youths.

Meanwhile, a sociologist and senior lecturer in the Department of Sociology, University of Port Harcourt, Dr. Sofiri Peterside has condemned the protest, saying Rivers State Government was not in support of the group, so, the protest should not have been allowed to take place.

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Peterside, while reacting to the protest which grounded activities in Port Harcourt metropolis with heavy gridlock along the Aba express road among others, blamed the security agencies for not being proactive in preventing the demonstration.

The March started at about 10am along Okporo Road, by Artillery junction, in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of the state.

The Guardian gathered that one victim was killed when a joint security operatives shot at the advancing demonstrating youths in an attempt to disperse them, and unfortunately, a bullet hit the man whose identity is not yet known, and several others were injured while trying to run.

However, this did not totally deter the protesters as they continued to march through the streets of Port Harcourt till about 5pm.

Narrating his ordeal, Etim said, “I was on my way to the office when I ran into traffic between Waterlines and Garrison bus stop in Port Harcourt. One lane was blocked and I was wondering what would be responsible. Getting closer, I discovered that it was a Pro-Biafra protest so I went to take a picture of the protesting youths. One of the soldiers detailed to quell the protest sighted me and immediately, three soldiers walked up to me and asked who authorized me to take the picture. I said I was a journalist and one of them said ‘What stupid journalist?’, seized my phone and smashed it to pieces.

Pleading with them to allow me take my SIM card, they refused and threatened to shoot me if I come down from the car. When I insisted on picking my SIM, one of them hit me with the butt of his gun, I had to escape at that point with serious injuries”

Meanwhile, IPOB members have declared that Biafra nation could not be silenced, no matter the amount of intimidation and harassment by troops of the Federal Government.

The protesters, dressed in black, carried US, Russian and Biafra flags, as they marched along major roads in Port Harcourt; even as security was beefed up at strategic places in the capital, to forestall breakdown of law and order.

One of the IPOB leaders, Okafor Amaechi, said they staged the rally for Trump, Russia, and Kanu, to show that Biafra believed in their agenda.

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