

Five feared killed in DSS, IPOB clash

By Lawrence Njoku, Enugu
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Five persons, including two officials of the Department of State Services (DSS) and three members of the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), were, yesterday, feared killed in a clash involving both organisations at Emene, Enugu State.

A number of others reportedly sustained injuries, while unspecified IPOB members were allegedly arrested by the police.

The Guardian gathered that the sleepy settlement was tense for a greater part of yesterday, as the force combed the community for the outlaws.

It was learnt that trouble began at about 9.00a.m. when machete-wielding members of the group supposedly converged on St Patrick's Community School compound along the old Abakaliki Road to conduct a "combat training for new members."

The information was said to have gotten to the DSS operatives, who stormed the venue, to truncate the exercise.

A heated argument, it was further learnt, led to a free for all .

The Biafra campaigners were said to have overpowered the security agents, making their way towards the nearby police post amid solidarity songs.

A source stated that though some officials of the DSS had guns, "they could not open fire because they were not permitted to apply force on the group."

"It was while attempting to gain entrance into the police station that about a dozen patrol vans, loaded with well-armed police, army and DSS, moved into the scene and started shooting at them," he clarified.

It was further learnt that worshippers who were heading for morning services had to retreat for fear of being caught up in the duel.

An account had it that fire from the security operatives killed three fleeing IPOB members.

A security source said: "We lost two of our men, and that is because they were not given instructions to fire at the group when they got there. When instructions came for them to defend themselves, it was already late, as the two officials were already dead. They actually went on raid this morning ((yesterday). Those boys carried machetes and other dangerous objects to attack them."

An IPOB chieftain, Nzekwe Ugonna, told The Guardian via phone: "We have been meeting peacefully at the venue."

Asked if they were actually training new members on combat, he stated: "It depends on what they mean by combat. We are peaceful, and not fighting any war."



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He claimed that over 15 of his members were arrested, adding: “We have recovered three dead bodies, and many sustained injuries while trying to escape from security men.”

Efforts to speak with the police command on the development failed. The force public relations officer in the state, Daniel Ndukwe, did not pick the numerous calls placed to his mobile line. He also did not also respond to the text messages sent to him.

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