

# 'Bloody' sit-at-home order for Kanu's release grounds Southeast

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- Gunmen kill four, set buses ablaze to ensure compliance
- Anambra police command attacked amid security reinforcement
- Protest was 100% successful, says IPOB spokesman
- HURIWA faults Southeast governors' silence

THE sit-at-home order by the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) to protest the detention of its leader, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu by the Federal Government, yesterday recorded total compliance.

IPOB had on July 30, announced the sit-at-home order, every Monday, starting from yesterday, until the unconditional release of Nnamdi Kanu.

The IPOB, through its spokesperson, Emma Powerful, had asked residents of the Southeast to observe August 9 as "Ghost Monday" to force the Federal Government to release Kanu, adding that the "total lockdown would continue every Monday from 6:00a.m. to 6:00p.m. until Kanu is released unconditionally from detention."

Earlier on Sunday, there had been conflicting reports and counter directives on the suspension of the sit-at-home order due to ongoing National Examination Council (NECO) examination for junior

secondary school students across the country, but reports from locations across the five Southeast states monitored showed that commercial banks, schools, markets and motor parks did not open for business.

The exercise, however, turned bloody in Imo and Anambra States. There were shootings in Orlu Council of Imo by unknown gunmen. The incident occurred around 1:30p.m., which forced residents to take cover in their houses as motorists completely avoided the Orlu main town.

The gunmen, in their convoy, were moving from location to location to enforce the sit at home order. The gunmen were said to have set ablaze a house in Isiala-Amadim village, Amaifeke, Orlu.

The unknown gunmen also moved to Mbaise axis, where they set ablaze two commercial buses at Ngwogwu, in Aboh Mbaise Council. It was gathered

that one of the buses was heading to Umuahia while the other one to Owerri. Some buses were forced to return to Owerri.

According to an eyewitness, "two persons inside one of the buses were burnt to death, while in another bus, a passenger and the driver were shot death. As I am talking to you now, there is no movement. People are in their houses now. We are living in fear. These unknown gunmen are given us trouble. Is this how we will get this thing that we are looking for?"

Another eyewitness said a stray bullet killed a young man in Eke Ngwuru, where the buses were set ablaze at Nkwo Ogwu Market, Aboh Mbaise Council. "A driver of one of the buses was shot dead while trying to resist the gunmen and was later burnt to ashes."

Two others, a motorcycle operator and a young man believed to belong to the Eastern Security Network (ESN), the security arm of IPOB, were killed around

Izuchukwu junction, Nnewi, the industrial hub of Anambra State. Trouble started when IPOB members blocked the entry and exit points of Nnewi to ensure the sit-at-home order was obeyed, but security operatives opened the roadblock, compelling the Okada rider to attempt passing through.

A young man believed to belong to the group confronted the Okada rider when some uniformed men stormed the scene and started shooting, leading to the death of the duo.

However, some civil servants dared the restriction and rushed to their offices to sign attendance register for the day, as Anambra State government had earlier threatened not to pay any worker who failed to come to work yesterday. It was gathered that many of those who went to work deserted their offices for fear of IPOB enforcement team.

At Obosi, Idemili North Local Council, the enforcement team moved from

shop to shop in different markets to ensure the sit-at-home order was complied with.

The police said its operatives repelled an attack by gunmen on the Nnewi command in Okigwe area of Umudim, Anambra. Tochukwu Ikenga, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), confirmed the development to newsmen in Awka, the Anambra State capital, yesterday.

According to Ikenga, operatives successfully repelled the attackers who came in vehicles in the afternoon. He said the police and other security agencies are currently at the Command to ensure the situation is under control.

Speaking on the incident, a resident of the area said they heard heavy gunshots around the Area Command at 2:00p.m.

"We gathered that the shooting was between suspected gunmen and policemen at Nnewi police Area Command, which caused pandemonium among residents."

The source added that the gunmen came in about seven vehicles to the police station and started shooting for over one hour. The resident also claimed that the

gunmen carted away arms at the station, adding that by the time reinforcement from a combined team of security agencies arrived, the attackers had left.

Except students involved in the NECO exam, other activities were grounded in Enugu, yesterday. Various parts of the state were also without electricity throughout the duration of the sit-at-home. Petrol and gas stations were also closed for business.

At the Enugu State secretariat, workers did not report to work despite the assurance from government that it would protect them.

Newspaper vendors in the state also did not come out for business, while the Monday edition of the national dailies was not supplied due to movement challenge.

IPOB spokesman, Powerful, rated yesterday's sit-at-home as 100 per cent successful in Biafra land. He stated that the unprecedented success and total compliance that greeted the exercise sent panic waves down the spine of IPOB oppressors and traitors among them.

He commended Biafrans,

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