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# Killings, arson in Anambra, Imo

• Council secretariat, vehicles razed

**F**IVE persons were killed in a bomb attack at the secretariat of the Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State. The attack happened around 1am yesterday.

It was gathered that the gunmen engaged the local vigilance members securing the secretariat in a gun duel.

A community source said four of the vigilance men and one of the hoodlums died in the shoot-out. He added that the hoodlums proceeded to unleash mayhem on other facilities.

He said: "They set fire on many of the buildings in the secretariat, including the administrative block, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Health office building, National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Office, Education Office and National Civil Defense Office.

"The gunmen came from Imo State near the border from Orlu. Unfortunately, security men arrived shortly after they left."

Police spokesperson Tochukwu Ikenga confirmed the attack. He said one of the hoodlums and four vigilance operatives on duty were

From Nwanosike Onu, Awka, Emma Elekwa, Onitsha, and Chris Njoku, Owerri

killed, with another one beheaded.

Ikenga added that five buildings were set ablaze with IED and petrol bombs, with bodies of the victims recovered, while joint operation is ongoing.

"Following the police/military operations ongoing in Ihiala and its neighboring town, the Operatives responding to a distress call about 2:55am today January 1, 2023, of an attack on Ihiala Local Government headquarters, our men neutralised one of the attackers, recovered two locally-made IED launcher, seven undetonated IED, 40 live cartridges, 15 live 7.62MM AK-47 ammunition, knives, charms, and other dangerous weapons.

"The attackers had already killed three vigilance operatives on duty, beheaded one and set five buildings ablaze with IED and petrol bombs. The joint force operatives engaged the arsonist/attackers and obstructed them from causing further damages, while

some escaped with injuries," he said.

Gunmen on Tuesday killed a couple - Mba Ifeoma and Ifechukwu Martin - who were returning home for their traditional wedding in Ndiejezie, Arondizuogu, Ideato Local Government Area of Imo State.

The Keke NAPEP driver who picked them at Ndiejezie junction was also killed.

Family sources said the couple arrived late and called their kinsman, the keke driver, to come and pick them from the bus stop.

Some villagers said the assailants also burnt a Hilux van and Range Rover sports car at same Ndiejezie junction. They added that a man was also kidnapped and his Lexus 350 jeep burnt around White fuel station, close to Ama-Edward in the area.

The incident has since triggered a mass exodus of residents from the area. They called on the government to come to their aid by beefing up security in the area.

Police spokesperson Michael Abattam was yet to confirm the incident as at last night.