

ments and remarks about the nation's leaders, and then

will stifle press freedom or freedom of expression. The

ing journalists, can operate when a nation descends into

Abia State, in July.

He announced the visit on

activities against the Federal Republic of Nigeria."

59 arrested IPOB members to face murder, arson charges

FROM ISHOLA MICHAEL,
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ADUROKIYA AND WALE
AKINSELURE, WITH AGENCY
REPORT

THE new Police Commissioner in Abia State, Mr Anthony Ogbizi, has said suspected members of Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), recently arrested, will be prosecuted for murder, arson and other crimes.

Ogbizi disclosed this during a press briefing and parade of seven suspected members of IPOB at Ariaria police station in Aba.

He said following the proscription of IPOB by governors in the South-East and its declaration as a terrorist group by the Nigerian Army, anybody found with Biafran materials would be arrested and prosecuted.

He said they would be prosecuted under the Anti-terrorism Act to ensure they were properly dealt with.

Ogbizi, echoing what the army had earlier said, stressed that IPOB, by its action, had shown itself to be a "terrorist group," which must be dealt with as such.

He said between September 10 and 14, Ariaria police station was attacked by suspected members of IPOB who destroyed everything at the station.

He said they came with petrol bombs which they used to

gain entry, destroyed property and took three pump-action guns.

"Even some policemen were seriously injured. In fact as I am talking to you, one of the injured police officer is dead. Doctors tried in vain to save his life.

"Now we have lost a soul and you know what it takes to train a police officer. You know the vacuum that creates. It takes a minimum of one year to train a police officer," he said.

Ogbizi said they also destroyed property of lawful citizens, adding that their demonstration was not peaceful.

He also alleged that the group attacked a nearby bank to get money to acquire more weapons.

The police boss said about 30 IPOB members were arrested when they attacked soldiers at Isiala Ngwa and about 29 were arrested in Umuahia.

He said suspected IPOB members also attacked military officers and residences of the Commissioner of Police and AIG Zone 9 in Umuahia.

Ogbizi said the army recovered several exhibits, including the coat of arms of Biafra from the suspects.

"As I am talking to you now, information reaching me said they have started gathering at Nnamdi Kanu's

house," he said.

Ogbizi called on the people to volunteer information on the whereabouts of the leader of IPOB, Nnamdi Kanu.

He denied the rumours circulating in the state that security agents had arrested Kanu's father.

Senate to meet security chiefs over crises in S/East, Plateau

Senate President, Dr Bukola Saraki, has said the Senate would meet with security chiefs to chart a path for the resolution of issues causing tension in the South-East.

He said the meeting, expected to hold soon, would address the tension in the South-East and the skirmishes in Plateau state.

Saraki said in a statement in Abuja, on Sunday, that security agencies, political and religious leaders must work for the promotion of dialogue as a means of tackling agitation, to ensure peace in the country.

In the statement by his Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Yusuph Olaniyonu, he urged all Nigerians to maintain peace and avoid statements or actions capable of aggravating the tension in parts of the country.

The Senate President said the crises in the country were not unconnected to the economic challenges being faced by citizens.

"The tension in some parts of the country has its roots substantially in the economic situation.

"The nation should be assured that some of the legislative and executive actions taken to address the economic problems are beginning to yield fruits.

"This is why we recently witnessed the rebound of the economy and the exit of the country from recession," he said.

He called for calm among the people, especially in the South-East and Plateau State, saying the government required the cooperation of everyone in solving all problems.

"I want to appeal to our people to avoid stoking ethnic or religious fires. We should not deepen the fault lines of our nation and place citizens in danger of violence and sustained crises.

"The government requires the support of all Nigerians and we should please give peace a chance. No real development or genuine economic activity can take place in the midst of crisis or tension.

"Investments and development thrive only where there is peace," Saraki said.

He advised political, community and religious leaders to take actions that would douse the tension and reassured the people that the

best way was for Nigerians to live together in peace and harmony.

"All leaders, at this point, must canvass support for government and preach peace, love and harmony.

"Once again, I plead with our people to avoid taking laws into their hands or antagonising our neighbours," he added.

No hiding place for IPOB members in Anambra —Obiano

Anambra State governor, Willie Obiano, said, on Sunday, that there would be no hiding place for members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in the state.

In a statement by the state Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Tony Nnacheta, the governor stated that his government aligned with the decision of the South-East Governors Forum to proscribe the group.

The statement read: "Sequel to the decision of the South-East Governors Forum which met on September 15, in Enugu, where amongst other decisions, was the proscription of the activities of Indigenous People of Biafra, the government of Anambra State wishes to state that government aligns itself with the clarion call from the South-East governors advising all persons

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