

Nine feared dead as soldiers, IPOB members clash in Rivers

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File photo: IPOB members.

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About five soldiers and four members of the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra have been feared dead after a clash in Oyigbo and other parts of Rivers State.

This brings to seven the number of IPOB members who reportedly died during the *#EndSARS* and police brutality protest in the state.

The IPOB members were said to have engaged in a shoot-out with a joint security team comprising soldiers and police deployed to quell their activities in Oyigbo,

Rumuokwurusi and other flashpoints areas.

Governor Nyesom Wike in a state broadcast on Friday condemned activities of the group despite the 24-hour curfew imposed on the Oyigbo council area.

Wike stated, “We were all witnesses to yet another orgy of violence and destruction inflicted by IPOB at Oyigbo Local Government Area and some parts of Port Harcourt City Local Government Area on Tuesday, October 20, 2020.

He said, “This evil, wicked and audacious action resulted in the unnecessary loss of lives, including soldiers and police officers, and the destruction of both public and private properties, police stations, court buildings and business premises.”

Sunday PUNCH gathered that the IPOB members and soldiers clashed from Thursday night till Friday evening. Spokesman for the 6 Division, Nigeria Army, Port Harcourt, Charles Ekeocha, could not be reached for comment on the matter. He didn’t answer calls to his mobile at the time of filing this report.

Meanwhile, the state police command said two cops were killed, four police stations burnt and over 50 vehicles set ablaze by suspected IPOB members who attacked the Oyigbo community and other areas in the state.

The state Commissioner of Police, Joseph Mukan, stated this when he led commanders of other security agencies in the state to the Oyigbo council area on Saturday.

In a statement by the spokesman for the state police command, Nnamdi Omoni, the CP had ordered a full scale investigation into the incident with a view to appending and prosecuting the culprits.

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The statement stated, “The Rivers State Commissioner of Police, Joseph Mukan today (Saturday) led commanders of the sister security agencies in the state to Oyigbo council area where hoodlums suspected to be members of the proscribed IPOB under the guise of #EndSARS protests invaded Oyigbo Area Command, Oyigbo, Afam and Umuebulu Police stations where they attacked the policemen on duty and burnt down the four police formations.

“In the course of the attacks, over 50 vehicles were burnt, including one Armoured Personnel Carrier, killing two policemen who were hacked to death and set ablaze.”

Mukan condemned the attack on public and private property, describing it as ‘ill-conceived, most unfortunate and an ill wind that would blow no one any good,’ while condoling with the families of the slain operatives.

He said, “The command will stop at nothing until the perpetrators of these dastardly acts are arrested and brought to justice.”

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