

Four cops killed as gunmen attack Enugu, Imo police stations

Solomon Odeniyi, Raphael Ede, Chidiebere Okeoma, Ogbonnaya Ikokuwu

1 THE Enugu State Command of the Nigeria Police Force on Tuesday confirmed the killing of four cops and burning of its Divisional Police Headquarters in Iwollo, Ezeagu Local Government Area of the state.

Our correspondent gathered that hoodlums had invaded the police station on Tuesday morning, killed four, injured some and set the police division and vehicles ablaze.

The gunmen were said to have also burnt the armoury, made away with weapons and released criminal suspects in the police cell.

A resident of Iwollo, who lives a stone throw to the police station, told THE PUNCH on condition of anonymity that the bandits arrived at about 1 am and started shooting indiscriminately at different directions.

"It was around 1 am when I heard sounds of gunshots from different directions in our area. I live very close to the police station. They were shooting for more than two hours.

"When the shooting stopped, we went to the scene and discovered that four policemen were killed. One of them, Effiong, the Investigation Police Officer, a station officer, who was a friend to all, was killed. His name was Igwe, another person Sunny and one other policeman from Olo.

"Some policemen were injured and taken to hospital while some escaped unhurt." The resident said.

Confirming the incident, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Daniel Ndukwe, said a manhunt had been launched to track down the hoodlums.

Tension in Imo as gunmen burn another police station
Meanwhile, there was panic in Imo State on Tuesday as gunmen set ablaze Orji Divisional Police Headquarters situated along Owerri-Oligwe Road in Owerri.

As of the time of filing this report, security operatives made up of soldiers, policemen and men of the Air Force were engaging the hoodlums in gun duel.

Two banks situated close to the scene were said to have hurriedly shot down, ostensibly to protect their workers and customers.

Businessmen ran away and vehicles diverted as motorists scampered for safety after running out of their vehicles.

Eyewitnesses told our correspondent that on arrival, the gunmen numbering over 10 attacked the police station after blocking the expressway with their vehicles.

The hoodlums were said to have told nearby business people not to panic as they didn't come for them.

It was not ascertained whether there was any casualty on the said of the security agents, but the police spokesperson in the state, Bala Elkana, told our correspondent that "we are repelling them. The war is ongoing.

Elkana said the state command had arrested five suspects in connection with the attack on Orji Divisional Police Headquarters.

He gave the names of the suspects as Chigamezu Sebastine,

26; Casmir Ibe, 36; John Chinonso, 24; Chukwudi Okoro, 28; and Alozie Daberechi, 25.

Army, others, take over burnt Imo police station

In a related development, scores of military, police operatives and other security agents have taken over the premises of Orji Divisional Police Headquarters in Owerri, which was burnt on Tuesday afternoon.

A source close to the scene told our correspondent that the hoodlums abandoned a Highlander SUV and small

vehicles they operated.

Woman, artisan killed, Imo residents flee as police, hoodlums engage in gunfight

However, a businesswoman was shot dead on Tuesday afternoon as gunmen and security operatives engaged in a gun duel in Owerri, the Imo State capital.

It was gathered that the woman in her 60s sold provisions at Harel junction, Orji, near the scene of the incident, before she was hit by the flying bullet in her shop.

Her corpse was lying on the floor as people, including her

relatives and neighbours, waited.

A lady, who was recording the gun battle with her mobile phone, was also said to have been hit by a stray bullet on her leg, but did not die.

However, an artisan simply identified as Matthew from Ikeduru LGA of the state was said to have lost his life after being hit by a stray bullet during the gun battle between security operatives and the hoodlums.

The gunfight between the police and hoodlums forced residents to flee their shops, offices and homes.

Police deny attack on FCT station

In Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory Command of the Nigeria Police Force on Tuesday said none of its stations in the nation's capital was attacked.

A video had surfaced earlier in the day, claiming that one of the police stations in the FCT had been attacked and set ablaze.

But in a statement, the spokesperson for the command, Mariam Yusuf, said the command had no record of such incident.

Gunmen kill police, one

other in Abia

But the situation was different in Abia State as a policeman attached to a Chinese was shot dead alongside the driver of the Chinese.

The incident was said to have occurred on Friday in Umuahia, the state capital.

An eyewitness, who spoke to our correspondent under the condition of anonymity, said the incident happened on Mission Hill Road at a spot where the office of the Nigeria Correctional Service is located.

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Mr Geoffrey Ogbonna, confirmed the incident.

FG feeds 10 million school children

Okechukwu Nnodim, Abuja

1 THE Federal Government on Tuesday announced that it had been able to feed about 10 million school children under its National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme.

The Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, Sadiya Farouq, announced this in Abuja and also stated that over 100,000 cooks had been engaged by the Federal Government through the NHGSFP.

Farouq disclosed this at the zonal flag-off and handover of feeding utensils to the Federal Capital Territory under the National Social Investment Programme.

The NHGSFP is one of the four key interventions of the Federal Government through the NSIP.

The minister explained that the aim of the school feeding programme was to increase enrollment of children into schools, boost their nutrition, encourage entrepreneurship, enhance agricultural production and generate rural jobs across the country.



•L-R: Chairman, Annual General Meeting Committee, Federal Nigeria Society for the Blind, Otunba Boye Ogunlaja; Chairman, Board of Governors, FNSB, Mrs Izevbua Amusu; Chairman of Council, FNSB, Mr Gbola Sobande; Executive Secretary, FNSB, Ms Demilade Lewis; and Treasurer, Mr Seyi Duggan, during the 63rd Annual General Meeting of FNSB in Lagos... on Thursday. Photo: Stanley Ogi

Tension spreads as cholera kills 20, 322 hospitalised

Armstrong Bakam, Bauchi

1 CHOLERA outbreak in Bauchi State has killed no fewer than 20 persons in the state, the state government has disclosed.

The state Commissioner for Health, Dr. Aliyu Maigoro, disclosed this during a press conference in Bauchi on Tuesday.

He said nine local government areas in the state recorded a total of 322 cases within one month, adding that the fatality rate on the outbreak was 6.2 per cent.

He said, "The index case was a 37-year-old housewife at Burra General Hospital on 24th April, 2021. She complained of abdominal pains, watery diarrhoea and vomiting. She and others were successfully managed and discharged."

Maigoro said that the ministry, through the Primary Health Care Development Agency, responded immediately to prevent the spread to other communities, adding that it was discovered that there was an ongoing outbreak of similar diseases in neighbouring Sumaila and other LGAs of Kano State.

"Bauchi recorded 147 cases with nine deaths, Toro 58 cases with three deaths, Ningi 51 cases

also with three deaths, Misau had 31 cases with four deaths, Giade recorded 10 cases with one death, Ganjuwa, seven cases with

no death.

"Shira and Darazo recorded one case each with no death, while Warji had 16 cases with no

deaths. This brings the total of confirmed cases to 322 with 20 deaths and 6.2 per cent death rate," he stated.

Our next batch of vaccine supply likely in August - NPHCDA

Deborah Tolu-Kolawole, Abuja

1 THE Executive Director of the National Primary Health Care Development Agency, Dr Faisal Shuaib, on Tuesday said it was not clear yet when the Federal Government would take delivery of next batch of COVID-19 vaccines.

Shuaib said this in Abuja during

a press conference organised to update the public on the status of COVID-19 vaccination.

He said, "While we have information that we may get the next consignment of vaccines by end of July or August, this has not been officially confirmed.

"When we are able to, we will provide an update regarding timelines and updates of the next shipment. At present, we do not

have that information available due to the wider context we are in."

Speaking further, Shuaib said, "The International Monetary Fund is now advocating a \$50bn fund to be spent on ensuring a faster rollout of COVID-19 vaccines globally and is calling for at least, 40 per cent of the global population to be vaccinated by the end of this year, and at least 60 per cent by June 2022."

Gunmen kidnap IYC president in Rivers

Dennis Naku, Port Harcourt

1 GUNMEN have kidnapped the President of the Ijaw Youths Council, Worldwide, Peter Igibifa, in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital.

It was learnt that Igibifa was kidnapped on Tuesday morning along the Port Harcourt International Airport Road by

a group of armed masked men.

Though details of his abduction were still sketchy, it was gathered that the IYC president had sent a message to his driver informing of his abduction.

Igibifa also asked the driver to tell the youths to go on with a planned protest, saying, "Nobody can infringe on the rights of the Niger Delta people."

When contacted, IYC Chairman, Action Committee, Strategy, Planning and Programmes, Israel Fubara, said the council had just received the news.

"It is information that we got. But we are making our findings. We have already put machinery in place to see how we can actually know what happened. So, we are investigating."

He further said the Ijaw youths had planned to shut down the region, saying, "Likely today (Tuesday) midnight, then action can begin because we wanted to exhaust the time limit before we can stage our action."

Asked if he has an idea of what would have led to the kidnap, he said the IYC had given the Presidency a 30-day ultimatum to constitute a substantive board of the Niger Delta Development Commission.

"We will liken the NDCC to the North-East Commission. But the politics played in NDCC can never be imagined in the North-East Commission," Fubara added.

When contacted, the Rivers State Police Public Relations Officer, Nnamdi Omoni, said, "Yes, I can confirm that he was abducted along the Airport Road. When we got the information, we deployed our technical intelligence to make sure that his whereabouts is known and for him to reunite with his family."

PDP official killed, eight injured in Plateau crash

James Abraham, Jos

1 THE Peoples Democratic Party zonal tour for Plateau Central was on Tuesday put on hold following an auto accident which claimed the life of the state Financial Secretary, Mrs Mary Adar Gar.

The PUNCH learnt that the tragic accident occurred on Monday evening in Mangu when a Vectra car rammed into

the vehicle conveying the PDP leaders, who were returning to Jos from Shendam, where they had attended the party's zonal tour for Plateau South.

The tour was in preparation for the forthcoming local government election in the state slated for October.

An eyewitness, Timothy Pam, said, "The impact of the accident threw the financial secretary, who was sitting at the back, out of

the vehicle. Unfortunately, she was confirmed dead at the Jos University Teaching Hospital. The driver of the Vectra car was still unconscious when I left the hospital."

The state Deputy Chairman of the PDP, Bitrus Golen, who survived the auto crash, also confirmed the incident, saying their survival was a miracle.

The state Publicity Secretary of the PDP, John Akans, said the

party had cancelled the PDP tour scheduled for the Central Zone today (Tuesday) in honour of the deceased party official and those who sustained injuries during the accident.

When contacted, the Public Education Officer, Federal Road safety Corps, Andrew Bala, said he would investigate the incident as the matter had not been formally reported to the Command.