

# Gunmen attack CUPP spokesman's residence, four feared killed

SOLOMON ODENIYI,  
DANIEL AYANTOYE and  
CHIDIEBUBE OKEOMA

**U**KNOWN gunmen on Saturday reportedly attacked the country home of the spokesperson for the Coalition of United Political Parties, Ikenga Ugochinyere, in the Ideato North Local Government Area of Imo State, killing four persons.

The gunmen were reported to have killed a yet-to-be-identified uncle of the CUPP spokesperson, who had in a seemingly distressed tweet on Saturday afternoon raised the alarm over the attack.

They were also said to have burnt several vehicles.

Ugochinyere, who is the National Assembly candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party for Ideato South and Ideato North Federal Constituency, in the tweet, said, "We need help in Akokwa, Ideato North Local Government Area, Imo State. My uncle has been killed now.. They are setting everything on fire. Please help."

In a statement, the state chapter of the PDP, described the attack as sponsored.

The statement issued by its spokesperson, Collins Opuruzor, read, "The Peoples Democratic Party in Imo State alerts that, at the moment, there is a well-coordinated armed attack going on at the Akokwa residence of Ikenga Imo Ugochinyere, the candidate of our party for Ideato North/South Federal Constituency.

"This has resulted in the killing of an undisclosed number of persons. Also, buildings are reported to have been set ablaze.

"Imo PDP calls on security agencies to immediately intervene and quell the attack on our candidate and our party members at his residence in Akokwa. Nigerians and the international community are to recall that on December 23,

2022, there was an attack on the convoy of our candidate by clearly-identified agents of the Imo State Government.

"It is shocking that despite our demand for the arrest and prosecution of those involved in that onslaught, nothing has been done by the security till this moment. Today represents a dark day for us in Imo PDP and Imo State at large."

But the Commissioner of Police in the state, Mohammed Barde, said the attack could have been carried out by members of the Indigenous People of Biafra.

"We had the incident in the afternoon. We understand it is the members of IPOB that attacked the house. No arrest has been made yet," Barde said.

Meanwhile, the CUPP has called on the Inspector General of Police, Baba Usman, to immediately order his men to rescue Ugochinyere.

The national co-spokesman for the coalition, Mark Adebayo, in a statement, claimed that he had received several text messages from his colleague, calling on all security agencies to rise to the occasion.

## How abducted ex-Edo lawmaker regained freedom – Police

ADEYINKA ADEDIPE

**A** former Edo State House of Assembly, Festus Udughele, who was kidnapped on Monday in the Ubeaja area of the state has regained his freedom.

Udughele was on his way to Benin City when he was kidnapped by gunmen and taken into the bush.

However, the spokesperson of Edo State Police Command, SP Chidi Nwabuzor, told our correspondent on Saturday that the lawmaker was rescued

by a combined team of the police, soldiers and men of the Edo State security network.

He said, "I can confirm to you that the former lawmaker has been rescued by the combined team of police, soldiers and members of the Edo State Security network. The security put up a gallant fight to ensure that the lawmaker was rescued.

When asked if a ransom was paid, Nwabuzor said, "The police don't discuss ransom. Our job is not to negotiate with kidnappers but to rescue abducted people."

## Lagos couple arrested for brutalising children

DEJI LAMBO

**T**HE Lagos State Police Command has confirmed the arrest of a couple, Busola Oyediran and her partner, Akebiara Emmanuel, for allegedly torturing her two children in the Egbeda/Idumu area of the state.

Sunday PUNCH gathered that neighbours of the couple who saw them subjecting the minors to torture resulting in

the victims sustaining injuries on various parts of their bodies, alerted the police.

The police, upon getting the information, stormed the couple's residence and arrested them on Friday, January 13, 2023. A picture showing injuries on the victims' bodies was sighted by our correspondent.

Contacted, the state police spokesperson, SP Benjamin Hundeyin, confirmed the couple's arrest in connection with the assault on the minors.