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MASSOB

Biafra: MASSOB, BIM shut down South East

— 14th September 2016

•4 feared dead in Onitsha protest march

MEMBERS of the Biafra Independent Movement (BIM) and Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) yesterday defied the police, as they embarked on a march in celebration of the 17th anniversary of the struggle for Biafra through non-violent means. The agitation was started by Chief Ralf Uwazuruike on September 13, 1999. BIM members converged on Obodoukwu Road, Onitsha, where they commenced the procession were confronted by a combined team of security agencies comprising the Army, Police, NSCDC, NDLEA who intercepted them when they got to Enamel junction along Onitsha-Owerri Road. The security agents allegedly shot sporadically to disperse members. In the ensuing melee, four members were reportedly killed. BIM Director of Information, Mr. Chris Mocha insisted that four members of the group were shot dead and that many sustained gunshot injuries while 34 others were arrested, including Mrs. Pauline Moghalu and Chief Nze Duru Alisi. Mocha said security agents killed their members and took their corpses away hence he could not ascertain the identity of those killed. But, Area Commander, Mr. Yahaya Abubakar, an Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), who led police to the place, told Daily Sun that nobody was killed but admitted that some members of the group were arrested. He stated that BIM members blocked Onitsha-Owerri Road causing serious gridlock which made security agents to disperse them and clear the road for free movement. Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), ASP Nkiruka Nwode also said there were no casualties but noted that about 14 members of the group were arrested for breaching public peace. Despite the constant assurances by President Muhammadu Buhari that Nigeria would remain an indivisible entity, Movement for the Survival of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) said they were nearing the Promised Land as Biafra would soon be actualised. Speaking in Aba, Abia State at the end of activities marking the anniversary of MASSOB, the coordinator for Abia South, Okporie Nkama said Biafra's actualisation was a foregone issue as the United Nations (UN) and other world bodies were aware of the arrangement. Addressing a mammoth crowd of MASSOB members in Awka after a holy mass presided over by a Catholic Priest, Rev. Fr. Samuel Anaebonam, Anambra Central Zonal Leader of BIM, Chief Vincent Iloh said the Nigerian Government should allow Biafra agitators have their own independent state since the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914 according to him expired in 2014. In Abakaliki, MASSOB members who marched round Nkaliki in Abakaliki Local Government Area and Onueke in Ezza South Council Area of the state chanted solidarity songs for their leader, Chief Uwazuruike and brandished Biafra flag and other insignias amidst tight security especially by members of the Nigerian Police Force. Members from Anambra South Senatorial zone comprising seven council areas including Nnewi North, Nnewi South, Aguata, Ekwusigo, Ihiala, Idemili North and South were not left out in the event where a church service was conducted to start the event.

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