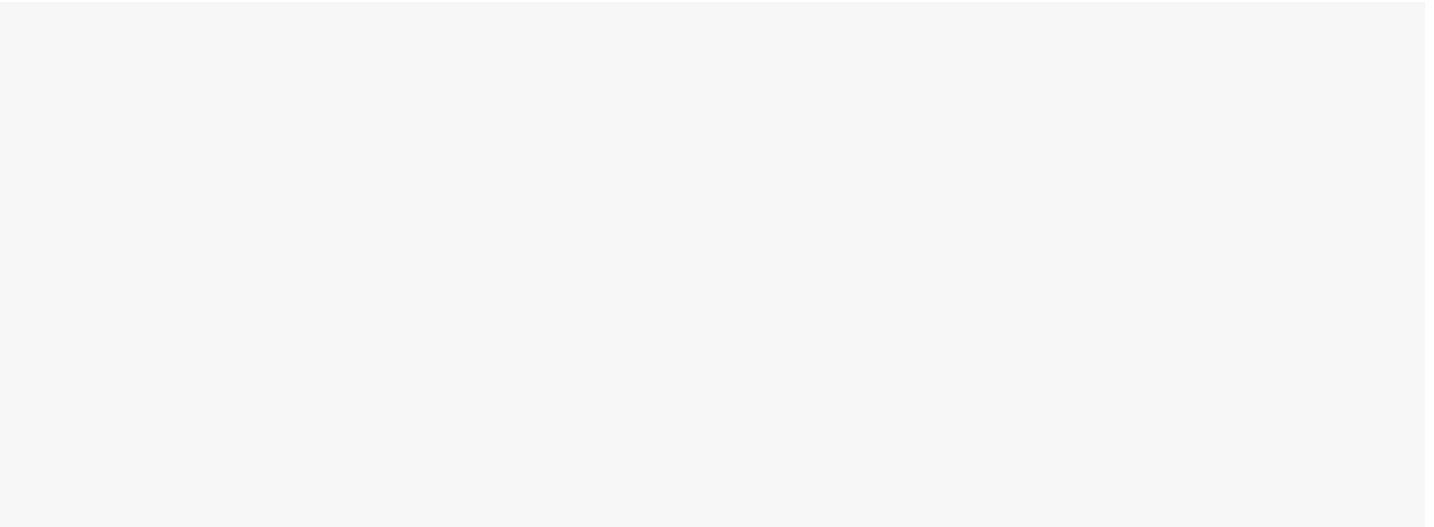


Bloody Sunday in Enugu as police, IPOB clash

• We lost 21 members, group • Only 4 killed, 5 in our custody, say police

24th August 2020



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SHARES



Geoffrey Anyanwu, Enugu

The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), yesterday, accused the Nigerian security personnel led by the Enugu State Police Command of killing 21 of its members and arresting 47.



IPOB said a joint force of the Police, Directorate of Security Service (DSS), Army and Air Force personnel attacked its members at their meeting ground in Emene without provocation.

But the Police Commissioner, Ahmad AbdurRahman, confirmed that only four persons died in the clash and accused IPOB of being responsible for the victims- four including one said to have been burnt alive.

He also said IPOB members abducted two personnel of the DSS and took away their service guns, though one was later rescued while the whereabouts of the other remained unknown at press time. AbdurRahman, who paraded five IPOB members arrested accused the group of training on weapon at the school where the clash took place. The incident according to eyewitness happened Sunday morning, at about 7.00am at Community Secondary Emene.

However, when a dozen patrol vans loaded with well armed security agents comprising police, army, air force and DSS arrived the scene and turned their guns on the IPOB members, they took to their knees.

Eyewitness said in the ensuing confrontation, sounds of gunfire and teargas fumes filled the axis between St Patrick's Secondary School and St Joseph's Catholic Church along the old Abakaliki Road and the premises of St. Patrick's Secondary School was "flowing with blood" as fleeing IPOB members were pursued into the school.

Scores of persons who were on their way to 7am mass were said to have scampered for safety while those already in the Church had to endure tear gas fumes that enveloped the entire environment.

In a statement issued yesterday by its spokesman, Emma Powerful, IPOB said: "The Nigerian government and her security agencies have once again exhibited another crude round of killing and massacre against the peaceful and unarmed IPOB family members in Enugu State today 23rd of August, 2020.

"We are surprised how Nigerian security agencies would allow officers in their respective formations like Army, Police and DSS to be slaughtering our people without any provocation. This rampant killing of innocent members of IPOB will be reciprocated in due cause. IPOB members have been slaughtered and arrested in their numbers across different locations in Enugu State today Sunday, 23rd August 2020.

"IPOB is a well rooted movement committed fully to the pursuit for Biafra freedom and independence from Nigeria. We are not a violent group and there is nothing they can do to change our resolve to maintain peace and order in our land. The efforts of the Nigeria government and her partners in crime in trying to push IPOB to change their tactics will amount to vanity."

But the state Police boss who briefed newsmen gave his account thus: "This morning (yesterday), I was alerted that members of Indigenous People of Biafra were on rampage along Ebonyi-Enugu Express road by Emene, precisely firing sporadically on the air and at the same time burning fire on the road.

I quickly mobilised my men from three Police Mobile Force Squadron, Anti-Kidnapping Unit, SARS, Anti-Cultism and all of them under the leadership of my Area Commander Metro, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Seyi. They all went there. Immediately they arrived at the scene, they came under heavy fire of the IPOB hoodlums.

But one of those arrested, told newsmen they were only doing exercise at the school, which they do every morning, when Police stormed the place and started shooting.

The encounter was said to have turned bloody when IPOB overpowered the DSS agents who stormed their meeting ground and allegedly opened fire on them and went ahead to sack Emene police station.



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