



Aftermath of IPOB Protests: Markets, schools, banks remain closed in Onitsha

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ONITSHA – Aftermath of the three crucial days of mass protests embarked upon by members of the Indigenous People of Biafra, IPOB over non release of their leaders, Nnamdi Kanu, markets, banks and schools remained closed, on Thursday, apparently in solidarity with the protesters or for fear of the unknown.

Both the Building Materials International Market at Ogidi, near Onitsha, New Auto Spare Parts market at Nkpor and other major markets remained closed, just as banks and schools remained under lock and key.

A detachment of stern-looking soldiers and mobile policemen were seen in their numbers standing on the roads and stopping all vehicles, a situation which led to a traffic gridlock from the former Toll Gate at Ogbunike to Bridge-head end of the Enugu/Awka/Onitsha expressway.

Speaking on the development, an Igbo leader, Chief Rommy Ezeonwuka said police road blocks are now back in the South-East region, because of the riotuous acts, adding that in as much as he was not against the agitation for the release of Nnamdi Kanu, it appeared some criminals had infiltrated into the protests and caused some havoc and untold hardship on the citizenry.

Meanwhile, a coalition of civil societies group has called for immediate resignation of the Inspector General of Police, IGP, Mr. Solomon Arase for his order to use force against the protesters, as well as his alleged vicarious roles in the Onitsha killings of protesting IPOB members.

In a press statement released yesterday and signed by Emeka Umeagbalasi, the coordinating principal of the coalition, said it is equally important to inform that the Nigeria Police Force under Arase is already under the jurisdictional watch of the International Criminal Court as compilation and computation of cases of all police and military related extra judicial killings in the country are steadily in progress, adding, “for failing to heed our warning of 13th November 2015, we will be glad to ensure that IGP Arase and his named sub commanders are handcuffed and flown to The Hague soon for the purpose of making them to face international trial for crimes against humanity”.

According to the coalition, “On the other hand, we call on the IPOB and its teeming followers to remain peaceful, non violent and law abiding at all times, not minding the State violence recently visited and unleashed on them.

“They must also watch their backs and be extremely vigilant so as to ward off sustained efforts of some commissioned elements within the Federal Government, particularly its security establishments and stooges within the Southeast

Governors Forum. They intend to implant elements of violence in their agitations so as to destroy their globally approved method of non violence and peaceful means. Moreso, to cash in on same for the purpose of deploying and applying deadly force or violence to further kill them in thousands and rope in Citizen Nnamdi Kanu on other trumped up charges or sustenance of its current trumped-up charges of terrorism and terrorism financing.”

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