



• Charred remains of vehicles burnt at Zone 13 Police Headquarters, Ukpo, Anambra State, yesterday.

Mayhem in Anambra, Abia: 9 dead, Zone 13 Police Hq attacked

- Two policemen, three others killed as gunmen attack Zone 13 Police hqtrs in Anambra
- Hoodlums raze Police station in Abia, free suspects
- IPOB denies involvement in attacks
- Explains why ESN, EbubeAgu can't work together
- Miyetti Allah demands inclusion in EbubeAgu security outfit

By Vincent Ujumadu, Ugochukwu Alaribe & Steve Oko

AWK—ATTACKS on security formations in the South East continued yesterday as gunmen again attacked the Police headquarters in Anambra and a Police station in Abia.

Two Policemen and three other persons were killed when gunmen attacked the Zone 13 police headquarters at Ukpo, in Dunukofia Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Similarly, hoodlums razed the Uzuakoli Police Division in Bende council area of Abia State.

The incident which occurred in the early hours of yesterday, saw the hoodlums freeing detainees after overpowering the policemen guarding the station.

Reacting to the development, the Indigenous People of Biafra, IPOB, yesterday, denied any involvement in the attacks of security agents, agencies and their formations in any party of the South East and Nigeria in general.

IPOB while describing the attack of Police Zone 13 as unfortunate, said it was not involved in any violent activity and, therefore, should not be associated with any violence in Nigeria, let alone South East and South South which was working very tirelessly to protect from terrorists and killer herdsmen.

IPOB also gave reasons the Eastern Security Network ESN, established by its Leader, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, cannot work together with EbubeAgu regional security outfit recently announced by South East governors. IPOB alleged that EbubeAgu would sabotage ESN if they were to collaborate as being suggested by some eminent Igbo personalities.

Meantime, Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria, MACBAN, has demanded the inclusion of Hausa/Fulani community in

the EbubeAgu regional security outfit.

Reading from a prepared text on behalf of the leaders, one of the stakeholders, Buba Kedemure, said they would accept any security outfit established by government, arguing that the entire Fulani should not be stigmatised because of some bad eggs among them. He blamed 'roaming foreign herdsmen' for the crisis with the host communities in some parts of the country.

Mayhem in Anambra

At the Police zonal headquarters, policemen gave the names of their dead colleagues as Inspector Ishaku Aura and PC Uzoma Uwaebuka. One of the buildings at zone 13 was razed by the hoodlums, while four vehicles were burnt.

A police officer at the zone said: "The hoodlums invaded the zonal headquarters at Ukpo in the early hours of yesterday, but our gallant men repelled the attack."

"In the process, they killed two of our men while our men gunned down three of their men, but they quickly carried them and zoomed off."

"Those hoodlums came in their numbers, in fact, not less than 20, but our men were equal to the task. They tried to gain access into our armoury but our men stopped them."

"One General Purpose Machine Gun, GPMG, was recovered by the Police from the attackers and the identity of the attackers was still not known."

The Zonal Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Nkeiru Nwode, who confirmed the incident, said apart from the GPMG, ammunition of various types were also recovered from the hoodlums.

Nwode's statement read: "Operatives of the Nigeria Police Force attached to Zone-13 headquarters, Ukpo, Anambra State, have successfully repelled an attack on the Zonal headquarters by

criminal elements in the early hours of today, (yesterday) 19th April, 2021.

"The attackers, who came in their numbers, shot sporadically in order to gain access to the facility, but were repelled by police personnel on duty who showed profound gallantry in the face of the seemingly overwhelming attack."

"Following the inability of the attackers to access the facility, they cowardly threw petrol bombs and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) on vehicles within the periphery of the headquarters. "One of the criminal elements was neutralized during the exchange of gunfire between the police and the attackers, while many of the gang members escaped with gunshot injuries."

"One L7A2 General-Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG), ninety-two rounds of 7.62mm live ammunition, one locally-made smoke pistol and an axe were recovered by the police. Regrettably, two police operatives sustained gunshot injuries and are currently receiving treatment."

"Anambra State Commissioner of Police, CP Monday Kuryas, who is also standing in for the Zonal Assistant Inspector General of Police, for the zone has commended the police operatives for putting up a strong resistance against the attackers."

"The CP, supported by other senior officers from Zone-13 Headquarters and the state command, is personally leading a special operation aimed at tracing, identifying and arresting the perpetrators to bring them to book."

"The CP also called on proprietors of private and public (including unorthodox) medical facilities in and around Anambra State to admit, but report anyone found seeking medical attention for bullet wounds and related injuries to the nearest police station."

"The CP has, however, called on citizens in the state not to panic, but go about their lawful duties. While assuring of the command's resolve to

re-dominate, reclaim and secure all public spaces as directed by the Inspector General of Police, the CP enjoins members of the public to continue to support the police with vital and timely information on the activities of criminals and other subversive elements within their respective communities."

Residents of Ukpo, who spoke to Vanguard, said they were frightened when they heard the sound of guns at about 4 am, adding that after some minutes of the fire power, they saw fire coming out of the Zone 13 headquarters.

The police had already cordoned off the recently reconstructed lane of Enugu-Onitsha expressway on which the Zonal headquarters is located and motorists traveling to or from Onitsha had a terrible experience driving on the dilapidated lane yet to be worked on by the contractor handling Enugu-Onitsha expressway.

Police Public Relations Officer, PPRO, for Anambra State police command, Mr. Ikenga Tochukwu, who confirmed the incident, said five suspects had been apprehended, while investigation was continuing.

Hoodlums raze Uzuakoli Police station in Abia

Vanguard gathered that some parts of the building and exhibit vehicles were burnt by the hoodlums.

Police Public Relations Officer, PPRO, Abia State command, SP Geoffrey Ogbonna, disclosed that the gunmen used dynamites and rocket launchers which frustrated the efforts of the policemen guarding the station to repel them.

He stated that the gunmen attacked the station a few minutes before 3 am yesterday.

According to him, the gunmen also freed detainees at the station.

IPOB denies involvement

A statement by IPOB's Media and Publicity Secretary, Emma Powerful, said: "IPOB and ESN are not involved in any attack on police and security agencies

in the country. We are not responsible and cannot be responsible for the attack at Police Zonal Command Headquarters at Ukpo, Anambra State, because we abhor violence. Any body or security agency involving us is either trying to be mischievous or trying to play to the gallery. Our leader is refined and is leading a refined and enlightened group that is averse to blood shedding or letting."

"Nigeria government and her partners in crime are always involving IPOB and ESN in their problems but we want to tell the whole world that we are not responsible for this barbaric attack and the federal government of Nigeria and their confused security agencies know the truth and just decided to be economical with the truth. They know where their problems lie. Their misuse and years of injustice is hunting them and they will not be free until they tell the world the truth."

Also reacting, a former President General of Onitsha Markets Amalgamated Traders Association, OMATA, and a community leader in Ifitedunu, Dunikofia Local Government Area, Anambra State, where incidentally the Police formation is located, Chief Ozoh Anaekwe has described the attack as unfortunate and saddening.

"The attack on Zone 13 Police Zonal Command Ukpo Dunukofia Local Government Area Anambra State, which incidentally is my council area is the result of bottled up anger against the Police and other security agencies."

"We are witnessing in states in Nigeria, South East Anambra State, what has not been witnessed in Africa before, where hoodlums attack police and security formations and set them ablaze. This is a warning and an advise to the Nigerian federal government that it is high time they call on all ethnic nationalities to a meeting to know their grievances and to address them before it gets to a situation of destroying the country."

"Federal Government should quickly call a meeting of all the ethnic nationalist in Nigeria, South East, South West, North East, South South, North West, Middle Belt and others so that people will talk. If there need to be a referendum, it should be conducted. The anger in the land is much and it is worst under the present federal government of Nigeria," he said.

Why ESN, EbubeAgu can't work together —IPOB

IPOB further alleged that EbubeAgu was floated to spy on ESN operatives as well as its members, hence, both outfits cannot collaborate as they do not share similar agenda.

The pro-Biafra movement claimed that "EbubeAgu is a ghost creation" unlike ESN that had identifiable personnel.

IPOB in a press statement by its Media and Publicity Secretary, Emma Powerful, likened collaboration between ESN and

EbubeAgu to "asking Lucifer to midwife the birth of Jesus Christ."

"Can light and darkness work together? It was when the governors failed to stand with the people who were being raped and slaughtered daily by herdsmen and jihadists that our leader, based on the yearnings by the people, had to establish ESN to save the situation. And ever since, the narrative has changed."

"How can ESN collaborate with EbubeAgu that is being supervised by compromised controlled Nigeria security?"

"Asking ESN to collaborate with EbubeAgu is like asking Lucifer to midwife the birth of Jesus Christ. But for the gullible, EbubeAgu was simply floated to spy on ESN and IPOB."

Miyetti Allah demands involvement in EbubeAgu

The Hausa/ Fulani community at the Abia Regional Cattle Market, Lokpanta, yesterday demanded involvement in EbubeAgu regional security outfit. The group also refuted the rumour making the rounds that bandits and killer herdsmen were being harboured in the market.

This is coming on the heels of speculations that bandits being pursued out of Ebonyi State by operatives of Eastern Security Network, ESN, are now taking refuge at the market.

Leaders of Hausa/Fulani community, cattle dealers and allied traders in the market who addressed newsmen, yesterday, said those behind the rumour wanted to pitch them against the host communities.

One of the stakeholders, Buba Kedemure, who read from a prepared text on behalf of the leaders said: "Our attention has been drawn to the rumour alleging that we harbour bandits, kidnappers and herdsmen in our market. That the said criminals were authorised by us to plan and attack their victims within and outside the state."

"The allegation is a calculated attempt by some disgruntled elements within and outside the cattle market to incite the host community and the government against our community."

They blamed some elements not happy with the cordial relationship between the northern community and their host communities since the 16 years existence of the cattle market, as masterminds of the rumour.

The leaders lamented the adverse effects of the rumour which they said had caused fear among northern community in the market thus leading to mass exodus of northerners back to the North.

"It has also led to high cost of cows as suppliers from the North are no longer willing to supply more products because of fear and apprehension."

They said they were law-abiding citizens who had lived peacefully with their host communities. They expressed worry over the escalating insecurity in the country and blamed it on government's failure to arrest and prosecute the perpetrators."