

# Anxiety, as gunmen burn down Federal High Court in Ebonyi

• Kill two soldiers, civilian at checkpoint in Ebonyi • Storm Ebonyi community, rob filling station, businesses • Amawusa blocked after gunmen attack in Imo • As Imo monarchs vow to lay curses on sponsors • Anambra imposes curfew on six communities

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**ABAKALIKI**—PALPABLE fear has once again, gripped indigenes of Ebonyi State following attack by gunmen in various facilities in the state.

In separate operations, the gunmen razed a section of the Federal High Court in Abakaliki in the early hours of yesterday, just as two soldiers and a civilian were shot and killed at a checkpoint in the state.

Another set of gunmen also operated in Onueke Community of Ezza South Local Government area of Ebonyi State, shot sporadically and robbed their victims of their possessions.

This set of gunmen, Vanguard gathered, trailed a customer to a commercial bank where they perpetrated the dastardly act.

These happened as the Douglas road leading to Amawusa in Owerri, Imo State, was yesterday morning blocked by the military men stationed in that area, after an attack by unknown gunmen on Monday night.

In a related development, the Anambra State government has imposed curfew on six communities in Anambra East and Oyi local government areas after gunmen attacks that killed nine people on Monday.

The razing of the Federal High Court in Abakaliki was allegedly, carried out by hoodlums but fire fighters intervened to bring the inferno under control.

The attack at the checkpoint which occurred on Monday night, revealed that the gunmen shot the two soldiers and a civilian at a checkpoint on Timber Junction area, in the Ahikpo North Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

Those injured as a result of the incident were rushed to an undisclosed hospital for treatment while the deceased were deposited at the morgue.

Vanguard gathered that the victims were attacked at about 8.48pm and their rifles were reportedly carted away. Other soldiers at the checkpoint ran inside the bush for safety.

A community source, who spoke to Vanguard on condition of anonymity said the gunmen arrived the checkpoint in a white bus and as the military men stopped them for a search, they opened fire on them.

According to him, the situation threw the two busy towns of Amasiri and Ahikpo into panic, as natives especially petty traders hurriedly packed their goods and went home.

"It appeared the military were checking them and all of a sudden, they opened fire on them. Two of the military men, a man and woman, died. Others ran away."

In a similar vein, the gunmen that operated at Onueke Community of Ezza South Local Government area of Ebonyi State shot sporadically into the air near the bank and made customers and staff to scamper in various direc-



• A Section of the Federal High Court burnt by hoodlums in Abakaliki, Ebonyi State, yesterday.

tions for safety.

A source, who was at the bank, said the gunmen shot the man they trailed to the bank.

The source noted that they did not enter the bank as their interest seemed to be on the man.

However, the gunmen were said to have moved from the bank to some outfits in the area which they robbed without any obstruction.

They were said to have entered a provision store and carted away some cartons of drinks. From there, they

moved to a nearby drinks shop and robbed the owners of their money.

Not satisfied, they moved into a nearby filling station and also carted away all the monies made from the day's sales.

Vanguard also gathered that one Mrs Ngebeke Oti, an eight months old pregnant Internally Displaced Person, IDP in Effium community, Ohaukwu local government area has been abducted by unknown persons in the community.

The mother of four was allegedly seized by suspected

warlords when she accompanied her friends from an IDP camp to harvest cassava in Ebeta village.

The woman who hails from Arochuku Local Government Area of Abia State, was living in Effium with her family before they were displaced by the crisis that erupted in the area in January, 2021.

## Amawusa blocked after gunmen attack in Imo

In Imo, a visit to Amawusa

by Vanguard confirmed that motorists were not allowed to ply the ever busy Douglas road but commuters were seen trekking long distances to their destinations.

It was gathered that shops especially within the Amawusa area were all closed at about 09:59 am.

Military men were also seen positioned strategically in and out of the Amawusa axis, observing the movements of persons within the affected area.

Hausas were seen standing along the road sides, some sitting in front of their shops and others were standing in groups discussing the night attacks.

Some of them who managed to narrate their experiences, described it as ugly and a situation they have not seen before since living in Owerri.

One of them who introduced himself as Sadiq said: "This kind of thing has never happened to us before. We were running to hide from the bandits. They were shooting in the air. Some of us who were running also injured ourselves. My brothers and I did not sleep in Amawusa, we were afraid that they may come back again."

## Imo attacks, monarchs vow to lay curses on sponsors

Meantime, hundreds of Imo State traditional rulers yesterday concluded that they would invoke their ancestors to lay curses on the sponsors of the attacks in Imo State.

The monarchs spoke to newsmen through the Head

of Imo State Traditional Rulers Council/Chairman of Community Policing, Eze Emmanuel Okeke, after their closed door meeting at Eze Imo palace at Mbiri Street in Owerri, Imo State.

According to them, the attacks are politically sponsored and any attack on the governor, Hope Uzodinma and Imo people is an attack on the traditional rulers in the state.

"We are of the opinion that every attack in Imo State are politically motivated. Therefore, we call on all the aggrieved politicians in Imo to sheath their swords. We voted them into power to work for us and not for fighting each other."

"We are calling on those involved to desist from it henceforth. Otherwise, we shall consult the gods of our land to lay curses on them no matter whoever is involved. We call on all the stakeholders in the state to come together to end this insecurity in the state."

## Anambra imposes curfew on six communities

Following gunmen attack which left nine people dead on Monday, the Anambra State government has imposed curfew on six communities in Anambra East and Oyi Local Government Areas.

The affected communities are Igbariam, Aguleri and Umueri in Anambra East, as well as Nteje, Awkuzu and Umunya in Oyi Local Government Area.

A statement by the Secretary to the State government, Professor Solo Chukwulobeli said the curfew, which took immediate effect, is between 7pm and 6am daily.

The statement advised the people and residents of the state living in the affected communities to obey the curfew order, as security personnel were on strict orders to enforce it.

## IPOB tackles NBC: You sanctioned Channel's TV but ignored Gumi's talk with bandits

By Ugochukwu Alaribe

**UMUAHIA**—THE Indigenes People of Biafra, IPOB, has tackled the federal government for suspending and fining Channels Television for talking with the group whereas, it ignored Sheikh Gumi after he met and talked with bandits.

IPOB said the TV station exposed the lies of the federal government that its commander, Ikonso, was not killed in a shoot out but that he was killed in his father's house.

Media and Publicity Secretary, IPOB, Emma Powerful, stated that the irrational and draconian action of the federal government through the National Broadcasting Commission, NBC, saying:

"We are not surprised but along with all good men and women of conscience, we strongly condemn, in the strongest possible terms, this wicked and undemocratic action."

"How many times has the Islamic cleric, Sheikh Gumi met with terrorists and bandits and the outcome of their parley aired on national televisions without NBC bathing an eyelid? How many times have the Boko Haram leader, Shekau's message and threats been aired uncensored on nation-

al television without NBC imposing any sanctions on NTA?

"We have always said it that Nigeria and its security agencies lose sleep when a matter has to do with IPOB and Biafra. Nigeria has not sanctioned her Minister of Communications, a known terror apologist and staunch supporter of mass murderers, yet she is using state instruments of intimidation against an innocent media house for interviewing a spokesperson of a persecuted people."

"Why is Nigeria always afraid of the truth? After spreading blatant falsehood about how it murdered Ikonso, the Imo State Commander of Eastern Security Network (ESN), IPOB was contacted to put the records straight, after which all hell broke loose at NBC."

"That Aso Rock wickedly turned against their long term buddy, Channels Television, tells you all you need to know. It confirms that you can't be friends with this bunch of hardened terrorists in power in Nigeria."

IPOB stated that the Nigerian media initially failed to investigate and report the accurate information about Ikonso's death and those with him, stressing that sections of the media only peddled lies and fake news dished out by the same security agencies that murdered Ikonso in his sleep.

"The bitter truth the Nigeri-

an government didn't want people to hear, which IPOB disclosed at the said interview, was that Ikonso was murdered in his father's house, not in any imaginary ESN camp or battlefield as the liars would hope to have us believe. The same Army, Police and DSS in Imo State that never for one day arrested or prosecuted any Fulani terror herdsman ravaging Imo State before the coming of Ikonso. The same Nigerian security agents that have always provided cover for terrorists and bandits, had the guts to ambush and kill the only man that drove terrorist herdsman out of Imo State. Something Hope Uzodinma, Ohaneze Ndigbo and those that conspired to kill him was not able to do."

"Commander Ikonso and the men with him in his father's house were murdered by the Nigerian state with the help of APC politicians and Ohaneze Ndigbo leadership in Imo State. The worst part

is that they lied about it. "The federal government of Nigeria knows they cannot suppress the truth as far as IPOB is concerned. We will always put the records straight because the facts will always speak for itself."

## Enugu raises alarm over sabotage of NCC's DIP project

By Anayo Okoli

**ENUGU**—Enugu State government, yesterday, raised the alarm over recent efforts by some persons to sabotage the ongoing construction of a Digital Industrial Park (DIP) by the Nigeria Communications Commission (NCC), at the green

triangle of the popular Murtala Mohammed Park, beside New Market, in Enugu North Local Government Area of the state.

In a statement signed by the Commissioner for Science and Technology, Obi Kama, the state government stressed that the persons involved in sabotage of the project are disrupting the ongoing construction works at the site under different guises.

"We are not Miyetti Allah and we don't kill or attack innocent individuals but terrorists herdsman masquerading as cattle herders in our bushes and forests."

"This was the mandate of ESN and the cause for which Ikonso, a hero and gallant, patriotic Biafran and his men were murdered in cold blood. Commander Ikonso was only defending the land of his ancestors. He was murdered with the active connivance of Hope Uzodinma, George Obiozor and APC politicians in Imo State. They wanted to cover this atrocity but when Channels Television gave us the opportunity to tell the truth, the murderers in uni-

form and their masters in Aso Rock became offended."

It further stated that NBC's action against Channels Television was only meant to gag and intimidate the press into total submission.

"It's part of the calculated attempt towards suppressing the press and blocking the outside world access to atrocities being perpetrated against indigenous peoples in Nigeria. This is how they hurriedly and unjustifiably proscribed IPOB and tagged its innocent members terrorists without according the movement the right of defense in a law court."

"The same security operatives that cannot withstand bandits and terrorists are zealously hunting down and killing IPOB members and supporters. While they are busy searching for innocent freedom fighters, the real terrorists are busy taking over Northern communities without any resistance."

Kama disclosed that "Enugu State Government had allocated Plot OS/1, Old GRA Enugu (where the green triangle, Murtala Mohammed Park is located) to the Nigeria Communications Commission (NCC), via the Enugu State Ministry of Land's letter reference No. LEN/38779/8, dated September 8, 2020, for the construction of Digital Industrial Park (DIP)".