



Enugu LG polls: Gunmen attack voters, kill 5

By Dennis Agbo,
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ENUGU—FIVE persons were feared killed yesterday when gunmen attacked two polling units in Enugu communities during the Local Government elections.

However, some sources said three, not five persons were killed.

The incident happened in Nkanu West Council area, where the gunmen were said to have invaded the polling units at Obeagu ward III and another polling unit at Agbani.

The incident was said to have disrupted the voting exercise as the gunmen destroyed electoral materials when the electoral officials and voters abandoned the voting venues and scamped for safety.

During the melee, at least five persons were feared to have been killed while some people who escaped sustained machet cuts and bullet wounds.

Two vehicles were also said to have been burnt during the attack.

In a similar vein, unknown gunmen attacked the news crew of the Enugu State Broadcasting Service, ESBS, who were covering the elections.

The media team comprised a driver, camera-man and three reporters. Also with them was a reporter with the News Agency of Nigeria, NAN.

Two of the ESBS reporters, Chiamaka Ezeaputa and Chigozie Alex-Nwafor and driver, Ebuka Ogboror however escaped the abduction.

The driver and one of the reporters, Mrs. Alex-Nwafor were said to have narrowly missed being killed. They were attacked at Obeagu in Enugu South local government area on their way to Agbani, Nkanu West local government area.

According to them, the whereabouts of two other team members of the station, Mr. Fred Nnaji and Mr. Monday Ogbodo were unknown even as their phone lines were switched off as at the time of speaking. The NAN reporter who was with them however escaped unhurt.

The gunmen were said to have taken the station's utility vehicle and camera as well as the crew's phones, cash and other valuables.

Reacting to the incident, the newly-elected Chairman of Nigeria Union of Journalists, NUJ, Enugu Council, Mr. Sam Udekwe however told Vanguard that the two abducted journalists were later released but were rushed to hospital.

Udekwe condemned the attack, stating that journalists work for the society and are most times prone to danger.

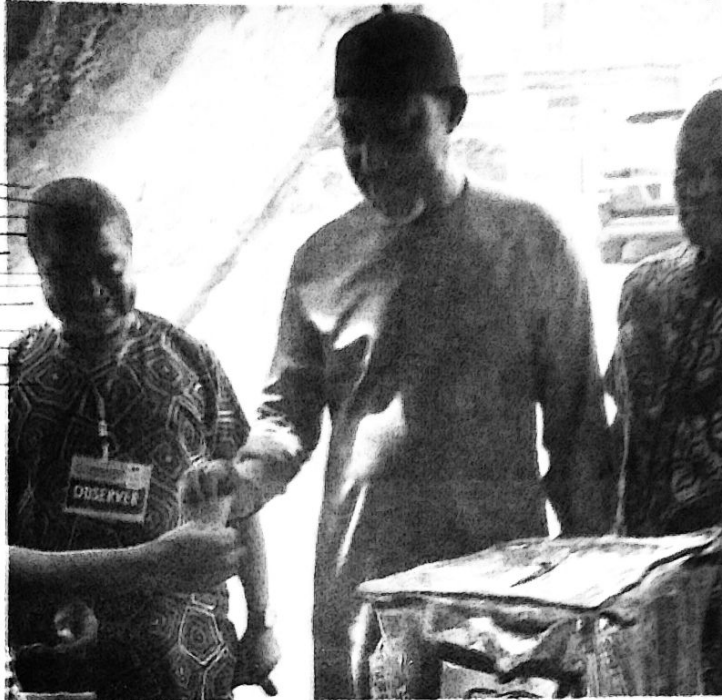
Meanwhile, the election was generally peaceful in other parts of the state though voter apathy was visibly noticed in some areas.

Governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi of the state voted at his Amube Ward 11 at about 11:58 am in Udenu Local Government Area of the state where voters turnout was impressive.

In many polling units monitored in Udi, Oji-River council areas as well as within Enugu metropolis, few voters were seen casting their votes.

But the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP candidate for Udi local government, Engr. Philip Okoh commended the conduct of the exercise in his polling unit, noting that it was peaceful.

Recall that All Progressives Congress, APC, had on Tuesday protested exclusion of its preferred



LG ELECTION: Prince Jeff Nnamani casting his vote at Nvu Amakpu polling unit, Agbani ward in Nkanu West Local Government Area, Enugu State during the state's Local Government election, yesterday.

candidates, alleging that the Enugu State Independent Electoral Commission, ENSIEC, chose the candidates for the new leadership of the party in the state.

Vanguard observed that voting started on time across Enugu North Senatorial District as

election materials were distributed on time to different polling units.

The People's Democratic Party, PDP, candidate in Nsukka Local Government Area, Walter Ozioko, in an interview with newsmen, said his party campaigned vigorously for the election, adding

that he is optimistic that his party will emerge victorious at the polls.

Ozioko also said that he would concentrate on opening up of rural roads to boost the agricultural potentials of his local government if elected the chairman of the local government.

...Election peaceful, transparent —Independent Observers

A COALITION of accredited Independent Observers for the 2022 Local Government Elections held in Enugu State, yesterday, has expressed utmost satisfaction with the conduct of the exercise in the state, describing it as "peaceful, transparent, free and fair".

Speaking to newsmen after the elections, the National Coordinator, Forum of Civil Society Organizations (FCSOs) in Nigeria, Comrade Fidelis Nweke, maintained that the elections were peaceful, transparent, and orderly in the various local government

areas they visited.

They commended Governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi of Enugu State for his consistency in conducting council elections in the state, describing the governor as "a true democrat who had effectively ended the use of caretaker chairmen in running the affairs of the local government areas in Enugu State".

Flanked by the National President, Centre for Positive Change and Civic Responsibility, Amb. Chinyere Madukwem and the Executive Director, Centre for Strategy, Ethics and Value, Mr.

Romanus Azubuike, the FCSOs National Coordinator, Comrade Nweke, disclosed that the Enugu State Independent Electoral Commission (ENSIEC) improved tremendously on its electoral process, adding that the materials and other logistics arrived the polling units on time as their officials displayed a high sense of professionalism.

"I want to say that the elections we observed today were generally peaceful because you cannot describe any election in Nigeria as being credible, as being fair without first of all being peaceful.

"It was a peaceful election, so we are happy to see this kind of election in Enugu State."

IPOB replies security operatives, Imo govt over attack of Police in Isu

By Chimaobi
Nwaiwu

NEWI—THE Indigenous People of Biafra, IPOB, yesterday, described the attempt by the Nigerian Army, Nigerian Police, the Department of States Services, DSS, and the Imo State government to blackmail it as unknown gunmen as an exercise in futility.

A statement by IPOB's Media and Publicity Secretary, Emma Powerful, said that the Army, Police and DSS, have consistently made futile efforts to link it with unknown gunmen and their dastardly activities, but that all their plans failed.

IPOB statement entitled "ESN is not unknown gunmen, stop linking IPOB with them" said it is absolutely clear to all and sundry that Nigeria government and other security agencies and their politicians created the unknown gunmen in the southeast particularly in Imo State because

the state government wants to demonize IPOB and its leader, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu.

IPOB's statement read: "We, the global movement and family of the Indigenous People of Biafra, IPOB, ably led by our great leader Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, wish to reiterate once again to the general public that IPOB volunteers and ESN operatives are not unknown gunmen contrary to allegations by the Nigerian Army, Police and DSS agents.

"We have warned the Nigerian security agencies to stop linking ESN operatives and IPOB volunteers or members with the hoodlums behind the kidnappings and snatching of cars in the region.

"It is absolutely clear to all and sundry that Nigerian government and security agencies and their politicians created the unknown gunmen in the region particularly in Imo State because the state government wants to demonize IPOB and our leader Mazi Nnamdi Kanu.

"We have also severally explained that our ESN operatives stay in the bushes and forests safeguarding our mothers, wives and sisters who have been victims of rape and killings by terrorists masquerading as herdsmen.

"ESN had no hands in the recent attacks at the Isu LGA Divisional Headquarters of Police by unknown gunmen. Those attacking them are those they created to demonize IPOB and its leader Mazi Nnamdi Kanu. Ironically, the monster they created to destroy ESN has turned around to hunt them. They should leave IPOB and ESN out of their problem."

Uzodimma's Cor

By Chinonso Alozie

OWERRI—TOP political appointee of the Imo State governor, Hope Uzodimma, the immediate past Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, Fabian Ihekweze yesterday dumped the All Progressives Congress, APC, and joined the Peoples