



FITNESS WALK—From left: Governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi of Enugu State; Nigerian former professional footballer, Kanu Nwankwo, and his Manager, Jerry Onuokaibe, when Nwankwo led a delegation of Kanu Heart Foundation to the Government House, Enugu, to inform the governor of the foundation's Fitness Walk, billed to hold in Enugu, at the end of September, yesterday.

Enugu is peaceful due to good leadership —Kanu Nwankwo

By Chinonso Alozie

ENUGU—NIGERIAN former professional footballer and Olympic gold medalist, Kanu Nwankwo, has extolled the leadership virtues of Governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi of Enugu State, describing the governor as a God fearing, peaceful and kind-hearted leader, who has made a lot of sacrifices and frantic efforts to keep the state peaceful and progressive.

Nwankwo disclosed that Enugu State is peaceful because Gov. Ugwuanyi is 'a man of good heart and a peaceful leader'.

Speaking when he led a delegation of Kanu Heart Foundation to the Government House, Enugu, on a courtesy visit to Ugwuanyi, yesterday, the football legend, popularly known as *Papito*, also commended the governor for his good works in the state, in spite of the economic, security and public health challenges bedeviling the country.

Nwankwo, who said that Enugu is his second home, informed Gov. Ugwuanyi that he and his team were in the city for the Kanu Heart Foundation Fitness Walk, billed to take place at the end of the month, to commemorate this year's World Heart Day.

The ex-international football star and founder of the Kanu Heart Foundation, revealed that

the foundation chose Enugu for the event because it (Enugu) is the most peaceful state in the South-East geo-political zone.

He pointed out that there will be free medical care on the day of the fitness walk in Enugu "to know who is fit and who is not fit."

Nwankwo, who sought the blessing and cooperation of the Enugu State Government towards the success of the scheduled fitness walk, expressed confidence that the governor will give them support.

Revealing what motivated him to embark on the life-saving humanitarian programme, Nwankwo who thanked God for saving his life after battling with heart-related ailment, said: "I am a symbol of hope and I believe that you out there will learn from me and that is why I am doing what I am doing."

Welcoming the football legend and his team to the Government House, Enugu, Gov. Ugwuanyi invoked the blessings of the forefathers of Enugu on them, expressing delight at Nwankwo's humanitarian gesture, saying that it is very rare.

The governor lauded Nwankwo for the life-saving foundation he has laid, adding that it is a world-wide recognition of which he (Nwankwo) will be remembered for.

Gov. Ugwuanyi assured Nwankwo of his administration's support and commitment to the success of the event.

Attack on Orsu: How Army major was killed, 2 captains in hospital —Uzodimma

By Chinonso Alozie

OWERRI—IMO State Governor, Hope Uzodimma, yesterday, said a Major of the Nigeria Army has lost his life to illegally manufactured explosives by bandits, in Awo-Idemili in Orsu Local Government Area in the state, while two captains of the Nigeria Army are currently lying at the Intensive Care Unit, ICU, of the Federal Medical Centre, Owerri.

Governor Uzodimma disclosed this to newsmen in Owerri, while narrating the incident of the Orsu attack that led to the burning of shops last Saturday.

Uzodimma spoke after the Imo State chapter of the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, called on President Muhammadu Buhari to set up an independent inquiry into the alleged burning of ancestral markets, shops and houses in Orsu-Ihiteukwa Community in Orsu council area of Imo State, by suspected members of Ebubeagu security outfit.

Uzodimma said last Saturday's incident occurred when one of the arrested bandits took the security joint force to Eke Ututu market, in Orsu LGA, where the bandits manufacture illegal explosives and it was uncovered that some of the shops were parked with items used to manufacture the Improvised Explosives Devices, IED. It was then that the security agents set the shops ablaze.

Uzodimma said the major died from last month's attack, while the two injured captains were attacked in last Saturday's incident in Orsu-Ihiteukwa.

According to Uzodimma, "You were all witnesses to the insecurity that enveloped Imo State for a period nearing almost three years now. With the daily occurrences of insecurity and wanton destruction of lives and properties in Imo State, we even made a clarion call to communities in Imo State to seek their support to the security of Imo State."

"We even called on these bandits to cease fire and surrender their weapons and discuss with government so that

Imo PDP asks Buhari to set up inquiry into burning of markets, houses in Imo

government can work with them in terms of rehabilitation and empowerment.

"Some of them answered the call; surrendered their weapons and talked with the government. We set up a rehabilitation centre where some of these people will be rehabilitated but adamant ones continued visiting mayhem and destroying properties."

The governor recalled that "Only last month, soldiers on duty in Awo-Idemili, in Orsu local government area were attacked and we lost a major of the Nigeria Army to illegal locally manufactured explosives."

"Also, last Saturday, the joint security force who arrested one of the bandits took the bandit after his confession as to where they operate from and to visit where the local explosives are manufactured. It turned out to be Eke Ututu market. They saw four shops where fertilizer and other electrical gadgets used to manufacture explosives were packed. As I speak to you, the captain who led that operation is now lying critical at the Intensive Care Unit, ICU, FMC Owerri, with another officer, a captain of the Nigeria Army."

"Soldiers were able to recover all these weapons and fertilizer meant to be used to manufacture these locally made explosives and in the process, they burnt down the shops. They were careful and no innocent lives were lost. They were able to destroy these shops where they met these weapons."

"And it pleases some persons, candidates of a political party to condemn the security agencies and even blackmail them and none of them made any attempt to visit the scene," he said.

Imo PDP asks Buhari to set up inquiry into burning of markets, houses

The PDP, made this call through the State Publicity

Secretary, Collins Oporuzor while speaking to newsmen in Owerri, on the Orsu attack.

The main opposition party said it had to speak out because of what it described as the "silence of Senator Uzodimma's regime," adding that it is worrisome that the economic activities of the communities were destroyed.

According to the party, "The People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Imo State condemns the bombardment of Orsu-Ihiteukwa, in Orsu Local Government Area of the state, which in its wake reduced to ashes the popular Eke Ututu market and also claimed human lives."

"No security agency has taken responsibility for the attack, though media reports and community sources point out that the operation might have been carried out by the military. What is even more troubling is that some sources have however alleged that the barbarity was perpetrated by Ebubeagu, the rampaging state-sanctioned militia force."

"For the people of Orsu-Ihiteukwa and even neighbouring communities, Eke Ututu is the symbol of economic wellbeing, and it embodies their dreams for a better tomorrow. Today, this source of livelihood for many thousands of people has become a heap of debris."

"Yet, despite the tears, blood and ravages that the incident has wrought upon this hapless community, it is telling that till this moment, the wobbling APC regime in Imo State has not deemed it important to explain to the people what happened and why it happened."

"Imo PDP holds that the silence of the regime of Senator Hope Uzodimma in the face of this unprovoked attack on vulnerable citizens speaks volumes about the depth of disdain which the failed regime has for Imo people. This is a regime that has long abandoned the primary responsibility of government, which is the security of lives and property. The silence is therefore a tacit endorsement of the reprehensible act against the people of Orsu-Ihiteukwa."

"Our Party calls on President Muhammadu Buhari to immediately set up an independent panel of inquiry to unravel the circumstances that led to the dastardly attack on unarmed citizens and bombing of a community market in Orsu-Ihiteukwa and to bring those found culpable to book."

"Imo PDP commiserates with the people of Orsu-Ihiteukwa over this unjustifiable attack. Given the hardship which the destruction of the Eke Ututu market would bring, our Party further calls on the Federal Government to move in expeditiously to facilitate the reconstruction of the razed market and compensate the affected traders," he said.

Peace, unity of Nigeria to top my agenda in governance —Obi

By Chioma Gabriel

ABUJA—PRESIDENTIAL Candidate of the Labour Party, LP, Mr. Peter Obi, has revealed that he will ensure lasting peace by unifying the country and rebuilding its social cohesion and mutual trust among the people.

Obi made the revelation at the Goodluck Jonathan Foundation Peace Conference, in Abuja, where he was represented by his Principal Adviser, Mr. Osoloka

Obaze.

Addressing journalists after the event, Obi restated his readiness to build a new Nigeria where the different parts of the country co-exist peacefully with one another, while working together to achieve integrated development of the nation.

He stated that one of the main tasks ahead of the new leadership, that will come into power, is uniting the country and restoring faith in our nationhood. "We are so badly polarised in our

country. We have become more sharply divided along ethnic and religious lines that we all live in mutual distrust of one another, and true peace continues to elude us," Obi lamented.

Obi further stated that he looks forward to a new Nigeria where the people will live and thrive in any part of the country and be free to fully maximize their potentials. He said that his government, when elected, will commit to justice, fairness and equity which, he said, are the bed rock of peace.

....Says, Tinubu too old to be president

penultimate week, that the meeting between Ezeife and Shettima, which held behind closed doors in the latter's place in Abuja, was related to the 2023 presidential election.

It was learnt that the meeting had caused a crack within the ranks of the Igbo Elders' Consultative Forum, and therefore made it necessary for the leadership of the socio-cultural body to address the essence of the visit to Shettima.

Therefore, Ezeife in a statement, late Tuesday night, said he decided to open-up, having previously heard rumours that he betrayed the position of the Forum on the 2023 elections.

While describing the APC presidential candidate, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu, as too old to run for the office of president, Ezeife said the ruling party's Muslim-Muslim ticket further knocks him out in the search for a new Nigerian leader in 2023.

"Yes, I went, uninvented, to Shettima. I was accompanied by a Maiduguri-born and brought up businessman of South-East extraction. Why?

"More than a year ago, a well built young man came to my office in Abuja crying desperately. He talked like someone considering suicide! He told me that he was finished, that the clothes on him were the only property left for him."

"He inherited a hotel from his father and built two more hotels by himself. All three hotels and a warehouse were bulldozed by the Borno State government. His other properties were also seized. He had helped the campaign efforts of the current Borno State Governor."