

**IPOB SIT-AT-HOME STRATEGY IN SOUTHEAST NIGERIA:
A SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS, 2021-2023**

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Abstract

Records abound on the chronology of people seeking for self-governance from time immemorial which is acceptable by both national and international laws. This gave credence to the agitation of the indigenous people of Biafra seeking for independence from the Nigeria government which has met a deadlock. It is based on this unfavorable response received by the people of Biafra that has resulted to the enforcement of a day compulsory sit at home order in the whole Igboland (south east region) as a strategy to further communicate their agitation. This strategy so adopted has its attendant implications on the lives and economy of the affected area and the nation at large which can never be over sighted. In this article therefore, the writer analyzed the economic implications of this sit at home order by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) on the economy of the areas and of the nation at large. This work adopted a phenomenological approach in its study and guided by the Theory of Social Solidarity. This theory is based on the individuals in a society which allows them to believe they can improve the lives of others. The study therefore finds that the sit-at-home order has devastating effects on the economy of the affected areas and the nation of which its consequences are always seen on the standard of living of the people. It also discovers that the people are always in fear as they are made to be indoors on Mondays and those

that depend on daily income to feed have been on the worst receiving end. It finally observes that the order affects companies, banks and government workers in the affected area as they are not expected to be seen at work. The research makes use of primary and secondary sources of data which includes; observation, experiential participation, journals, book of readings, mainline books, newspaper and unpublished project works. The study makes bold to conclude that the sit at home order is drastically affecting both the people of the area and the nation because it affects the growth of the economy. The paper therefore recommends that the Nigerian government should look into the agitation of the people and help in proffering a solution to the issue at stake which will in turn help to revive the already dying economy.

Key Words: Socio-Economic, Dynamics, Analyzing, IPOB, Sit-at-Home, South-East

Introduction

The ongoing Monday sit-at-home strategy and activity of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in the Southeast-Nigeria is rooted in the historical struggle towards restoring an independent state of Biafra. Historically, Biafra had previously existed as an independent multi-ethnic republic; encompassing majorly the Igbo; the Ijaw, Efik and the Ibibio people among few other ethnic groups. According to Campell (2017), the current IPOB is traced to the declaration of Biafra by Lieutenant Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu for three years (between 1967 and 1970). The current Biafra agitation resurfaced through IPOB, and this was triggered following the nature of Nigerian federalism and democratic system that is perceived as disadvantaged to the Igbo due to the claimed evidence of marginalization of the Southeast region majorly dominated by the Igbo ethnic group, by the Nigerian government. These evidence of marginalization have been pin-pointed by scholars to include political alienation, inequitable resource distribution, extra-judicial killings, heavy military presence among similar other factors.

Amanabu (2017) states that, the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) is a pro-Biafran and a separatist group formed in 2009 by Nnamdi Kanu, a dual citizen of Nigeria and the United Kingdom. The group agitates for self-determination from the Nigerian State for the independence of the Republic of Biafra. Adigun (2018) affirms that, the group may have used different strategies in their agitations, such as; sit-at-home, street marches, and the use of different channels of communication such as Radio and Television to let the world know about their plight. These agitations, no doubt, have socio-economic and political implications both on the south east region and on Nigeria generally (Alumona, Azam and Iloh, 2017). In the first place, during the numerous demonstrations and protests by the IPOB, economic activities around the towns where these protests are held are disrupted. The limelight of IPOB Monday sit-at-home became known to the public following the re-arrest of the IPOB leader; Mazi Nnamdi Kanu by the Nigerian Government on June 29, 2021. Omole (2021) states that, since the arrest of the leader of the group, the sit-at-home order has been the major strategy employed by IPOB supporters to react spontaneously to the arrest of their leader; thereby commemorating important days in the history of Biafra struggle in showing solidarity with the leader of IPOB and as well to make Nigerian government free Nnamdi Kanu from what they perceived as unlawful detention/imprisonment.

The regular Monday sit-at-home and its unlawful enforcements on other days across all the states in the Southeast region/zone has generated a lot of controversies between the group and the federal government of Nigeria with deadly consequences on socio-political and economic activities within the South-east region. Economically, the sit at home strategy or order has presumably led to the closure of market places particularly on Mondays and other commercial activities in the region, closure of banks every Monday and other sit-at-home days, burning of commercial vehicles and shops among others that serve as indictors of the sit-at-home strategy on Nigerian economic activities.

The foregoing trends occasioned the nature of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) Monday sit-at-home order through a proposed interrogating links in form of selected indicators on the political economy of the Southeast region of Nigeria. The Monday sit-at-home order as a strategy employed by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) towards freeing their leader from the detention of the Federal Government of Nigeria *vis-à-vis* actualizing the sovereign state of Biafra has been prevalent in the Southeast-Nigeria. The frequent closure of schools and absence of teachers and lecturers on duty on Mondays, the shutdown of most banking institutions on Mondays, the non attendance of government workers on Mondays, the closure of markets and businesses within Southeast Nigeria, the prevalent fear of traveling freely and confidently between states in the Southeast geopolitical zone, particularly on Mondays, and the excessive deployment of state security personnel to Anambra state solely during the gubernatorial election, among others, manifest as evidential indicators.

It is noteworthy that the above mentioned activities resulting from the IPOB Monday sit-at-home strategy and order has presumed multi-dimensional effects on the socio-economic and political economy of the South-east region of Nigeria. Hinging on the foregoing statement, the research is making a reasonable attempt to ascertain the extent to which the IPOB Monday sit-at-home strategy and order has affected the political and economic activities of the Southeast region of Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

This work adopts Emile Durkheim's Theory of Social Solidarity which was propounded in 1893. This theory is based on the individuals in a society which allows them to believe they can improve the lives of others. This theory is based on the fact that diverse groups in a society have similar values and beliefs. Solidarity is a human connection or association with one another that leads to an unusual bond that binds groups together. Solidarity is motivated by a variety of factors which includes affection, shared values, ideas and self-interest for some



(Douwes, Stuttaford, and London, 2018). The Social Solidarity theory is of two types: Mechanical and Organic Solidarity. Mechanical solidarity is the social organization of individuals in society who have one belief system. This single belief system sparks up individual members to cause them to work cooperatively and harmoniously. Organic solidarity is a social organization that manifests due to one's need for one another. The theory was used to find individual acts and extrapolate what could happen collectively. In this study, IPOB declared a mandatory Monday sit-at-home order which most south easterns complied with in solidarity for Mazi Nnamdi Kanu's prompt and unconditional release. Individualistic action snowballs into a group action working together to achieve a central goal, in this case, the unconditional release of the IPOB leader by the Nigerian federal government.

General Overview of Independent People of Biafra (IPOB)

The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) is an Igbo separatist group founded in 2014. The movement wants a group of states in south-east Nigeria, made up mainly of people from the Igbo ethnic group, to break away and form the independent nation of Biafra. The organization carries out its agitation activities through unarmed protests, media messages, radio broadcasts and civil disobedience. Nwafor and Omeovah (2019) reveals that, the group operates a London based Radio station which was established in 2009. In Nigeria, access to the frequency modulation (FM) broadcasts is available in six States (Abia, Anambra, Imo, Rivers, Ebonyi and Enugu) although there are restraints to its access in some of these areas. In other States which may not have any access to the Frequency Modulation, the broadcasts can be listened to online as the group also runs a web based radio station.

According to Nwafor and Omeovah (2019), the director Mazi Nnamdi Kanu states that, the new Radio Biafra had been broadcasting from London, on short wave frequency since 2009; he further revealed that Radio Biafra broadcast was brought home to intensify the struggle for

Biafra restoration by creating awareness and mobilizing the indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and other Pro-Biafra groups like the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) towards achieving the goal. Efforts of the government to shut down the radio station were unsuccessful as it still broadcasts till present on 102.1 FM and 15.6 AM at different wavelengths. However, while some have alleged that the Radio station spreads hate speeches and incites war in Nigeria which Nnamdi Kanu often refers to as a zoo in his broadcasts, supporters of the group have vehemently asserted that the radio broadcasts were only being truthful. Obiorah (2022) states that Nnamdi Kanu is only speaking the raw truth and that is why these Nigerians who do not like hearing the truth are angry with him. Being truthful has nothing to do with hate speech instead; people hate you for speaking the truth.

Nevertheless phrases such as monkeys and baboons (referring to Nigerian citizens), zoo republic (referring to Nigeria), Biafra or nothing, the zoo must fall, *Ohaneze ndi aturunandiberibe* (*OhanezeNdigbo*- an association of sheep and fools), are some derogatory words often used by the IPOB leader in some of his broadcasts. From the messages passed through these broadcasts, the group's mission and activities are made known to the public. The sit at home order for members of the group normally holds on the 30th day of May (the day Ojukwu the then military Governor of Eastern Region and later the Military Head of Republic of Biafra declared Biafran independence in May, 1967) of every year, which they have mapped out as a day to remember Biafran fallen heroes. In revealing a short biography of Nnamdi Kanu, Christen (2019) records it as thus:

Nwannekaenyi Nnamdi Kenny Okwu Kanu is the known leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and also the director of Radio Biafra. He was born in Isiama- Afara, Abia state, Nigeria and studied in the University of Nigeria for two years but had to migrate to Europe in order to finish his



studies following delays occasioned by incessant strikes by the University's academic and non-academic staff. Kanu was later admitted to London Guildhall University now known as London Metropolitan University to study Political Economics. (p. 40).

He founded the Radio Biafra in 2009, since then, he has been very active in his secessionist activities and just like the MASSOB, he firmly believes that the Igbo are Jews and constantly refers to himself as one. On 14th of October, 2015, he visited Nigeria, where he was arrested in his hotel room at Golden Tulip Essential Hotel Ikeja, Lagos State on charges of treason (Asomba, 2015).

On October 18, 2015, his followers took to the streets in several major cities in southeastern Nigerian protesting against his arrest. On the 19th of October 2015, it was reported that Nnamdi Kanu had been granted bail after a secret arraignment at Magistrate Court, Wuse 11, under stringent bail conditions. However, upon the issuance of the Form 36, the court was unable to produce Mr Kanu. Therefore Kanu's continual incarceration despite meeting his bail conditions, prompted the lawyer to tag the anomaly, a clash between Judiciary and Executive in a democratic government. According to Okakwu (2017), in a statement Prof Nwala also condemned the continued detention of Mr Kanu despite calls for his release by local and foreign governments and organizations.

Gaffey (2019) states that, in Nigeria, governments and leadership of various zones from within and outside the Eastern parts of Nigeria appealed to the President to release Mr. Kanu, whom, everyone knows as an unarmed, non-violent prisoner of conscience. Rather, he was arraigned in an Abuja magistrate court for the first time on November 23, 2015 on the charges of criminal conspiracy, intimidation and membership of an illegal organization; charges that could amount to treason (David, 2020). On that day, his supporters went to Abuja (the

capital of Nigeria) on a peaceful protest with placards, sang and danced outside the court premises while the hearing proceeded. Inscriptions like ‘Biafra Now or Never’, ‘Buhari Release Kanu for us’, ‘On Biafra We Stand’, were written on their T-shirts. More protests by IPOB members numbering over 15,000 and 20,000 protesters grounded vehicular movements in the southeastern key economic cities of Onitsha and Aba concurrently.

However, the government ignored several court orders calling for Mr Kanu's bail until nearly two years when a court order on the 28th of April 2017 granted bail to Mr. Kanu on health ground’, while giving a list of stringent bail conditions to meet if he intended to stay free. The IPOB leader was banned from public speaking, granting interviews or being in a group of more than ten people. As a condition of that bail, David (2020) reveals that Mr Kanu had to bring a prominent Igbo leader, a wealthy resident of Abuja and a senior Nigerian Jewish leader to provide 100m naira each as surety. Nonetheless, it was alleged that, he went against his bail conditions. Protests and activities by the IPOB members increased during this time and in response, the government initiated a program which it termed ‘Operation Python Dance’.

IPOB and Sit-at-Home Order

On the phenomenon of IPOB sit-at-home, a statement released by the Anambra state commissioner for information and public enlightenment published by Onu (2021) on The Nation Newspaper on the issue of Monday sit-at-home states:

This reminder has become imperative in view of the tendency of some people to observe in the last few months every Monday as a work-free day, in compliance with the directive by some non-state actors in an effort to press the federal government to free the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, who is standing trial for some charges in Abuja brought by the federal administration. (p. 90).

The above statement depicts the ongoing observation of IPOB Monday sit-at-home order as a result of the detention of Nnamdi Kanu (IPOB leader) and many government workers and citizens have been strictly abiding by the sit-at-home order. Subsequently, the Commissioner maintained that the Anambra State Government has told the residents not to entertain any fear, adding that IPOB had made it clear that no person would be harassed in any way. Critically, from the statement the activities of the IPOB via Monday sit-at-home strategy has created fear in the mind of the people towards engaging in public activities on Monday and other sit-at-home days; thereby ensuring security confidence in the mind of the people.

On a similar ground, Nwauwu (2021) reported that a sit-at-home was declared/ observed by the IPOB October 21, 2021 in solidarity with Nnamdi Kanu who is expected to be in court that day for trial. In essence, the statement also depicts the IPOB Monday “sit-at-home” as a strategy towards achieving their aims *vis-a-vis* freeing their leader (IPOB) from detention. However, this assertion was later disregarded by the IPOB media and publicity secretary (Emma Powerful), entitled “Ignore fake news on sit-at-home on Monday and Tuesday”. However, a report by Akpan (2021) featured Emma Powerful on December 1, 2021 which reads:

We wish to inform Biafrans, friends of Biafra and lovers of freedom that our leader, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, will be in court tomorrow, December 2, 2021 in Abuja. We therefore urge Biafrans living in Abuja and its environs to come out en-masse to solidarize with our leader (p. 47).

He later maintained that; there will be no lockdown tomorrow in any part of Biafra land as a result of the court appearance. Biafrans resident in Biafra land, as well as visitors to Biafra land, are free to go about their lawful businesses without fear of molestation and intimidation. From the assertion, it can be deduced that the IPOB members and

leaders have become the determinant of the days that people are meant to move in public places in the Southeastern region of Nigeria.

Reasons for IPOB Sit-at-Home Order in South-East

There are many reasons for the introduction of sit at home order in the south-east geo-political zone of Nigeria by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). Some of the reasons include:

i. To Protest against the Trial of Their Leader

Okah (2021) submitted that the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) declared that residents of the South-east would observe what it called “sit-at-home” order, to protest against the trial of its re-arrested leader, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, by the federal government over various offences bordering on treason, incitement and others. According to the group, shutting down of shops, schools, public and private sectors every Monday will force the federal government to drop all charges against the IPBO leader and even consider granting the separatist group’s wish to secede from Nigeria. According to IPOB as reported by Nnachi (2021):

We the global family of the Indigenous People of Biafra IPOB (IPOB) ably led by our great leader Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, wish to announce to all Biafra citizens, friends of Biafra and lovers of Biafra freedom and independence that IPOB leadership has declared every Monday a ghost Monday. This declaration takes effect from Monday, August 9, 2021. We wish to state full details of this coming ghost Mondays every week, our people must understand that it was designed to show the world how serious we are towards this fight for Biafra freedom and independence. Everybody must adhere to this clarion call put in place by the leadership of IPOB and it would be good for everyone to know that IPOB will not relent until Biafra is fully achieved. We declare every Monday sit- at- home throughout



Biafra land until our leader Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, regains his freedom. (p. 90).

The members of IPOB maintains that the federal government must allow Nnamdi Kanu access to his personal physicians, and allow him to sign documents given to him by the British Government enabling him Consular assistance. According to them this protest will continue once every week until their demands are met.

ii. Actualization of an independent nation of Biafra

Another reason is to achieve the goal of the group. Njoku (2022) reported that the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) first introduced the sit-at-home order in the Southeast to add pressure to their quest for the actualization of an Indigenous nation of Biafra and to show that most people in the Southeast support their quest for freedom. It soon transformed into a tool for achieving other goals, including raising of awareness for other Biafran-related issues and, of recent, it has become a tool to draw attention to the plight of the leader of IPOB, Nnamdi Kanu. Other reasons are to draw the attention of the government to the southeast region and create awareness of the groups objectives nationally and internationally.

Socio-Economic Implications of IPOB Sit-at-Home Order in the Southeast

The sit-at-home order has caused an unprecedented restriction or flow in the economic activities of the southeast. According to Okoye (2021), “the prevailing situation of the shutdown of the South-East every Monday has continued to inflict collateral damage on the economy of the South-East States. The *hoi polloi*, who sell their daily livelihoods by hawking sachet beverages, vegetables, fruits and others-bear the brunt of the weekly shutdown of the South-East” (p. 20). From the assertion, it is evident that IPOB Monday sit-at-home order has continued to disrupt the commercial activities across the south-east states of Nigeria. Okoye (2021) also maintains that “since the commencement of the

observation of the sit-at-home order on Mondays, a majority of Igbo people, whose survival depends on their daily earnings had gone to bed on empty stomachs on countless nights because they had no money with which to buy food” (p. 11).

The implication of this assertion is that IPOB Monday sit-at-home order has continued to bring about suffering, hunger and poverty in the south-east region, as many people could no longer engage on their daily activities on Monday (the first business day of the week) and other IPOB sit at home days. In essence, economic activities are being questioned due to the IPOB Monday sit-at-home strategy. More so, a statement by the First vice president of Nnewi Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NCCIMA); Chief Moses Ezukwo on September 18, 2021 reported by Okoye (2021) captioned:

The chamber of Commerce, business owners and traders continue to compute their losses, though they put the cost of every Monday sit-at-home at about N8 billion. The development has robbed the zone comprising Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States of over N50 billion so far; adding that the loss in the private sector amounted to over 60 percent. In this amount, the transport sector losses at least N3 billion any day there is a lockdown in the region. An average of one million people move around, in and out of South east each day, at #3,000 per traveller. (p. 13).

No doubt, it is assumed that this action (Sit-at-home) has dug a big hole in the economy of the five states of the Southeast region. In the same report, Omole (2021) maintains that:

Despite the announcement of its suspension, people still observed the sit-at-home order as streets, markets, offices, motor, parks, and banks, amongst others were closed and deserted every Monday. It was discovered that two reasons gave impetus to this: First is the fear of being attacked by hoodlums, masquerading as



IPOB members and second, being the sympathy most people have for IPOB's cause (p. 27).

Nnachi (2021) further maintains that:

The combination of these factors makes the people in the zone stay at home every Monday. Indeed, when the action started in August, cities of the zone were ghost towns with streets, roads, avenues, closes, amongst others left desolate in Umuahia, Awka, Enugu, Abakaliki, Onitsha and Owerri, the situation persisted as many streets were empty even as shops and banks had their door shut penultimate Monday. (p. 18).

Reports coming from Aba in Abia State indicate that despite the opening of some markets, traders were not seen in their shops. The same scenario played out last Monday according to a report published by Agency Report (2021) which reads “Economic and social activities have halted in Imo over sit-at-home order by the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) over fear of possible attacks” (p. 12). More so, the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) who monitored the incidence in Owerri, reported that residents of the state have deserted markets and streets of the state capital for safety. From the foregoing assertions, it is evident that the IPOB Monday sit-at-home strategy or order has continued to pose series of threats to the economic and commercial activities across all states in the South-east region of Nigeria.

Okah (2021) reports that the sit-at-home has continued to hold because of fear. Some people who tried to go about their daily businesses were attacked, making others to stay indoors for fear, offices and markets have remained closed too” (p. 38). The same report also maintained that those who wanted to observe the sit-at-home order by the IPOB and those who did not want to do so, stayed at home. There is no evidence that the sit at home has brought IPOB and its sympathizers any closer to the attainment of their larger political objective of a Biafran nation. Instead, the economic life of the zone and the sense of order have been

adversely affected. Days without banking services, closed markets and government offices have meant vast economic losses with a cumulative dent on the well-being of people in the region. In essence, the Monday weekly sit-at-home order in the Southeast region has not only affected commercial activities alone but almost every sector *cum* facets of life have been affected.

A similar report by Njoku, Ogugbuaja, Osuji, Udeaja, Akpa and Akhaine (2021) reads that, markets and roads were empty in the major cities of Aba, Owerri and Awka, heart of the former Republic of Biafra in a renewed push by the separatist Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB)” (p. 25). The same report equally maintained that, in Imo, economic and social activities in all the twenty-seven local councils suffered a serious setback as everyone remained indoors. Apart from those who opted to respect IPOB’s sit-at-home order, many others stayed away for fear of being arrested by security personnel. The roads were deserted, markets were closed and public transport services were withdrawn by operators. Some school owners announced compulsory mid-term holiday to enable pupils remain at home with their parents. It was the same story of empty streets, closed shops and deserted roads in Umuahia, Abia’s capital city and Aba, the state commercial nerve center. Residents fully obeyed the sit-at-home order though there was no official sanction of the day in the Southeast, government institutions were grounded in knowledge by the sit-at-home directive. Banks and other corporate businesses equally shut their gates to customers for fear of being attacked by hoodlums.

A report on Vanguard News Nigeria, (2021) on the effects of IPOB Monday sit-at-home on the socio-political and economic activities of the region reads “Human and commercial activities were grounded in the South-Eastern States on Monday as residents obeyed sit-at-home order by the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB)” (p. 6). The same report also maintained that people and residents stayed back home, leaving streets emptied, especially most busy area known as

Isigate in Umuahia, the Abia State capital. More so, it was reported that government offices, schools, banks, shops, business centers, markets, malls, plazas and petrol outlets remained closed and also, private and commercial vehicles kept off the roads, leaving the metropolis like a ghost town due to IPOB Monday sit-at-home order.

A statement observed in the report submitted by Okoye (2021) on the effects of IPOB Monday sit-at-home on national development and political activities of the Southeast region reads “enforcers of the sit-at-home order have inadvertently been dealing a fatal blow to education in the area. Not a few examination candidates had missed taking their examinations because the enforcers of the sit-at-home order thwarted their efforts to reach the venues of their examinations on time on days we observed sit-at-home order” (p. 12). From this assertion, it is obvious that the IPOB Monday sit-at-home order and strategy has continued to wreak havoc on the socio-political activities within the state, because rights to education are being tampered with. Citing a practical example, Okoye (2021) equally maintains thus “In Imo state, there was a news report about the invasion and violent dispersal of examination candidates by gun men on the days their examinations coincided with the shutdown of the South-east” (p. 21). In essence, western education is one of the factors that aid national/political development, hence when people are being denied this right; it is a smack on political activities.

Similarly, a report by Ogbonnaya, Nwosu and Ogbodo-Iwuagwu (2021) states that the students of a Comprehensive High School located in the remote Njaba community in Imo State were writing their English Language paper in the external examination moderated by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) when the gunmen, now known as the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) struck. In the same report, it was also maintained. Not just education is affected in the weekly sit-at-home strike; every sector of the economy in the zone has continued to bear the brunt.

Moreover, another report by Njoku, Udejah, and Nzor (2021) on the impact of IPOB's Monday sit-at-home directive indicates that IPOB is aware of the economic, educational, and various other hardships caused by this order. Last Monday's sit-at-home received widespread condemnation, particularly because it affected students taking their National Examination Council (NECO) Mathematics Examination. According to Ogbonnaya, Nwosu and Ogbodo-Iwuagwu (2021) published on Independent Nigeria reads:

There have been pockets of violence recorded in some areas. For example, during the week there was an incident where some hoodlums in Enugu attacked a bus distributing bread around the old Orié Emene Market. It was learned that the driver escaped by whiskers, but the bus fully loaded with loaves of bread was looted and the bus set ablaze by the hoodlums. Similarly, two tricycles were also torched in the area before security operatives arrived at the scene to restore peace and order. (p. 8).

The same report also maintains that “a tricycle operator on popular Arthur Eze Road in Awka was stopped, matcheted and his tricycle burnt into ashes. Not quite long ago, a trailer carrying spare parts worth #30m was set ablaze in Nsukka, in Enugu State. With such huge destruction how will fear allow people to come out and risk their lives and investment? (p.17). Indeed, the economy of the Southeast states is worse for it as the sit-at-home continues. Many people who earn a living through daily work are left frustrated and out of jobs. A recent and unconfirmed survey said the Southeast by the action is losing N8 to N10 billion every Monday. In essence, IPOB Monday sit-at-home strategy has posed serious threats to the socio-political and economic activities of the southeast region but all facets of human activities were being affected.

Religiously, Christians were prevented from carrying out church activities on Mondays. Many schools and churches that violated the Monday sit-at-home order were attacked. According to Okoye (2021), a

report from a woman from Nnewi, that she was in the church on a Monday morning, it was a 6 o'clock morning service and all of a sudden, gunmen started shooting in the air, dispersing people to their various homes. A Catholic priest stated that men of God were being kidnapped for ransom while ritual and political killings had gained ground in South-East. He said that, Churches were highly affected as a result of agitations for self-determination and its inherent sit-at-home order. Many men of God have been kidnapped. Ransoms were paid for their release while some have lost their lives in the process. Ritual and political killings are on the increase as cult activities have gained momentum in South-East.

Conclusion

IPOB sit at home order which started on the 9th of August 2021 till date was as a result of agitation for freedom/independence of the Biafrans, release of the IPOB leader Mazi Nnamdi Kanu and other issues like the ill application of fiscal federalism, corruption and bad leadership in Nigeria government amongst others. Though the sit at home was to help in lessening the burden of the Igbo masses but on the other hand this became a big burden on the people. In some places like Nnewi, Aba, Onitsha, Orlu, Umuahia, Enugu have encountered a lot of damages as a result of the sit at home order. People's means of income are being affected mostly the daily income earners who depend and survive by what they earn daily, high rate of killings of both innocent souls. Thus, IPOB sit-at-home order is a serious threat to the economic activities of the Southeast region of Nigeria. It is evident that IPOB Monday sit-at-home order has posed negative multi-dimensional effects on the socio-political and economic activities of the zone, particularly in the areas of commercial activities, education, transportations, closure of Government and private institutions every Monday and other sit-at-home days. On this basis, an urgent solution is needed. Thus, IPOB sit-at-home order is a serious threat to the socio-political and economic activities of the Southeast region of Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the problem encountered in this research, this article makes the following recommendations:

- The federal government should adopt political solution to resolve the crises in the south east geopolitical zone. This will help to restore peace and security in the zone.
- Government should engage in dialogue which should involve the federal and state governments, IPOB representatives, traditional rulers, women's organizations, youth groups, security forces and civil society organizations. These stakeholders should discuss possible solutions to the causes of insecurity in the state and the relationship it has with other region.
- State governments should work on a zonal framework to articulate and pursue a robust development blueprint for the region. This should include targeted empowerment programmes designed for unemployed youths to minimize their vulnerability to recruitment by separatist and engaging them positively will be for the good of society.
- Measures for addressing the socio-economic drivers of insecurity should be prioritized by key actors, particularly the state governments and the private sector. The organized private sector can support youth capacity building and skills acquisition, while state governments develop and fund regional development plans.
- Nigerian Government should try as much as possible; make quick judgment on the issue of Mazi Nnamdi Kanu (the leader of IPOB) since the sit-at-home order was employed as a strategy to pressure Federal Government to free him from detention.

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