

Killings, Abductions And Disappearances Aimed At Violently Seizing And Pocketing Criminal Billions By Police, Military And Armed Non-State Actors Took The Center Stage Of 2024 Christmas And 2025 New Year Holidays In The South-East

-Intersociety

- **Police and military seized at gunpoint and criminally pocketed N21.8billion (police N15billion and military N6.8billion) from South-East roadblock and barracks' extortions in two months: Dec 2024-Jan 2025**
- **Uga Junction and Atani Road Naval checkpoints most 'lucrative' in South-East; N60million (N1m per day) seized at gunpoint and criminally pocketed in two months (Dec 2024-Jan 2025) from at least ten extortion sources**
- **kidnappers seized N600million from defenseless abductees in 20 days: Dec 28-Jan 18 and N1.2billion in two months (Dec 2024-Jan 2025)**
- **240 defenseless citizens killed in two months: 140 by armed non-state actors; and 100 others killed outside the law by military, police and killer-vigilantes**
- **270 defenseless Southeasterners abducted in two months: 160 by armed non-state actors; and 110 others held outside the law and facing permanent disappearance by military, police and killer-vigilantes**

Intersociety Report (Updated) Onitsha, Eastern Nigeria Saturday, February 1, 2025

Nigerian Military Criminally Pocketed N6.8billion In Two Months: Dec-Jan:

The deployed personnel of the Nigerian Armed Forces and the Nigeria Police Force and their High Commands in the South-East are responsible for seizing under gunpoint not less than N21.8billion from motorists, other road users and those who came in contacts with them in their barracks between December 1, 2024, and Jan 31, 2025. The sum represented "criminal billions" drawn from direct and indirect roadblock and "barracks extortions"; numbering over twenty sources and seized from members of the civilian population with legitimate means of livelihood who were extorted while preparing or returning for 2024 Christmas and 2025 New Year holidays or extorted while heading back to their bases after the holidays. The findings above were derived from detailed research and investigation and their findings contained in the Intersociety's December 22, 2024-Special International Report: "Ocean Of Innocent Blood Flowing In Eastern Nigeria". The 282-Page Special International Report was unveiled in Enugu on December 22, 2024 at an international Press Conference. Not less than 19 pages (105-124) were set aside in the Report on police and military extortions and allied corrupt practices in Eastern Nigeria particularly in the South-East. The deployed security forces and their high commands were found to have mindlessly perpetrated the trio of armed state actor conduct-atrocities in the Region; namely: abductions, unlawful killings and corrupt practices of alarming proportion.

According to patterns and trends of these extortions studied by the Report, there are presently at least 300 direct military roadblocks, and 500 patrol teams or indirect roadblocks mounted on South-East roads-with 98% of them engaging in direct and indirect roadblocks extortions using publicly procured assault rifles and their ammunitions and patrol vans. These extortions and allied corrupt practices by military personnel are contrary to Section 108 of the Armed Forces Act of 2004 which prescribes fourteen years jail for any military personnel found involved in offense of extortion. The Report further found that average of N100,000 is illicitly pocketed daily by each of the military roadblocks; translating to N80m daily from 800 military roadblocks and patrol teams in the South-East or N2.4billion per month and N4.8billion in the past two months of December 2024 and January 2025. Addition of N2billion was included and estimated to have arisen from “direct and indirect barracks extortions” and allied others-totaling N6.8billion, seized at gunpoint and illicitly pocketed from South-East motorists and allied others including those that encountered the military personnel in the past two months of December 2024 and January 2025.

Further discovered were not less than ten sources of indirect military extortion in the South-East: with a clear case in point being patterns and trends of the corrupt practices of the officers and personnel of the Ogbaru Base of the Nigerian Navy at Onitsha and Ogbaru-the most lucrative military roadblock in the South-East; to the extent that not less than N1m is seized at gunpoint and criminally pocketed daily; translating to at least N60m in the past two months of December 2024 and January 2025 by the Uga Junction Main Naval Checkpoint and three others located along Atani Road and Harbor Industrial Layout in Ogbaru, Anambra State.

Nigeria Police Force Criminally Pocketed N15billion In Two Months: Dec-Jan

In the past two months under reference, the deployed officers and personnel of the Nigeria Police Force and their high commands manning estimated 2,500 direct roadblocks and patrol teams or indirect roadblocks on South-East roads and allied others are found to have been responsible for seizing at gunpoint and criminally pocketing not less than N15billion from motorists, other road users and those that encountered the police authorities at their barracks. The breakdown of the above indicated that Imo State with highest number of police roadblocks and patrol teams (700) in the South-East accounted for N2.94billion in the past two months of December 2024 and January 2025; on daily average of N49million (N70,000 per police roadblock), N1.47billion monthly and N2.94billion in the past two months of December 2024 and January 2025.

Anambra State, which presently maintains second largest police roadblocks and patrol teams in the Region with estimated 600, N42million was criminally pocketed daily, N1.26billion monthly and N2.52billion in the past two months of December 2024 and January 2025. In Abia State with third largest police roadblocks and patrol teams of estimated 500 in the Region, N35million was criminally pocketed daily, N1.05billion monthly and N2.1billion in the past two months of December 2024 and January 2025. In Enugu State with fourth largest police roadblocks and patrol teams of 400 in the Region, N28million was criminally pocketed daily, N840million monthly and N1.68billion in the past two months of December 2024 and January 2025; and Ebonyi State with fifth largest police roadblocks in the Region of 300 police roadblocks and patrol teams, N21m was pocketed daily, N630m monthly and N1.26billion in two months of December and January 2025.

Addition of estimated N3.5billion was made, representing ‘criminal billions’ seized at gunpoint from those that encountered police authorities at police barracks including “bail fees” and monetization and commercialization of arrest, detention and criminal investigations as well as N1billion added as “dark figures of crimes”; totaling estimated N15billion; or N10.5billion arising from direct and indirect roadblock extortions plus N3.5billion arising from “Police Barracks Extortions” and N1billion arising from “dark figures of police corruption proceeds”; totaling N15billion. It must be informed that Police roadblock extortion in Nigeria particularly in the South-East is prohibited and criminalized by Section 99 of the Criminal Code Act of 2004 and Section 408 of the Penal Code Act of 2004; both of which prescribe jail terms of three-seven years; and three-fourteen years respectively.

Kidnappers Seized N600m In 20 Days (Dec 28-Jan 18) And N1.2b In Dec-Jan

Estimated N600million was seized at gunpoint from 2024 Christmas and January 2025 New Year holiday makers or returnees by armed non-state actors operating with assault rifles and criminal digital devices in Anambra, Imo, Enugu and others. The seizure of the estimated N600million by armed criminal syndicates affected more than 100 victims forced at gunpoint to pay the ransoms demanded, which heightened between December 28, 2024, and January 18, 2025; a period marking the peak of the two festivities during which members of many South-East families returned home for post-Christmas and New Year activities including burials, funerals, marriage ceremonies, town union meetings, etc. Among the five South-East States, the worst hit was Anambra where estimated N250million or more was seized from kidnap victims through their relatives, friends and associates; out of which Aguata, Orumba North and Orumba South Local Government Areas took the lead with not less than N150million including N35million paid at gunpoint by relatives and associates of a multimillionaire businessman between Ezinifite, Igboekwu and Uga on Dec 28, 2024; N16million (N8m each) paid at gunpoint by parents and other relatives of two siblings abducted on Dec 29, 2024 in the area and not less than N25m paid by relatives and associates of four others abducted same day in the area.

On Jan 16, 2025, another indigene of the area was abducted and released the next day after millions of naira found in his account was transferred out at gunpoint. On Dec 28, 2024, not less than five indigenes of Achina were targeted and abducted at a relaxation joint located between Amesi and Umuchu and held captive in kidnappers’ den for several days until their relatives and associates coughed out tens of millions of naira for their release. Elsewhere around Urum part of the State, a Reverend Father was abducted and later freed after his friends and associates paid N20million, during which a man who was held with him paid N10.3m. A United Kingdom-based businessman was abducted on Jan 10, 2025, at Amaokpala in Orumba North of Anambra State. He had returned for funeral service of his cousin and was freed after three days on payment of undisclosed millions of naira. Before then, a lady banker was abducted on Dec 13, 2024, and held for days, and later killed and dumped by her captors along a popular roadside after sources said her abductors collected N25million ransom and went ahead to kill her. There were also two Catholic nuns abducted on Tuesday, Jan 7, 2025, along Ufuma Road in Orumba North, and freed six days after, but it was unclear if ransoms were paid before they were released. These are just to mention but a few.

Kidnappers in the South-East also made Imo State the second worst hit State in twenty days of Dec 28, 2024 and January 18, 2025, during which not less than N150million was seized from kidnap victims at gunpoint; followed by Enugu State with estimated N100million including tens of millions of naira strongly believed to have been seized by Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen from freed victims of three 18-Seater busloads of passengers abducted at Enugu-Ezike in Igbo Eze North of Enugu State on Thursday, Jan 9, 2025 involving at least 40 passengers. The passengers were traveling to Kogi and nearby northern parts when they were abducted and held for days by the Jihadists during which their mobile phones and other valuables were seized and dispossessed; and all the monies in their accounts transferred out. Parents and associates of some of the victims were also believed to have hurriedly transferred tens of millions of naira to have their loved ones freed.

Abia and Ebonyi States also grappled with kidnap-for-ransom particularly along their highways, urban centers and farmlands by Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen, communal warlords and allied others; accounting for not less than N100million under 20 days of December 28, 2024, and January 18, 2025. In all, nothing less than N600million was lost to Jihadist kidnappers and others drawn from Counterfeit Biafra Agitators and “street criminal entities” thriving in kidnapping syndicates in 20 days of December 28, 2024, and January 18, 2025. Generally, nothing less than N1.2billion was most likely to have been lost to kidnappers by defenseless Southerners in the past two months of December 2024 and January 2025 in the Region.

240 Defenseless Civilians Killed In Two Months (Dec 2024 And Jan 2025)

By our findings derived from our December 22, 2024, Special International Report (“Ocean Of Innocent Blood Flowing In Eastern Nigeria”: 282 Pages, not less than 240 civilian citizens of the South-East were attacked and killed in the past two months of December 2024 and January 2025. The breakdown shows that armed non-state actors took responsibility for at least 140 defenseless civilian deaths; during which Imo State was the worst hit with not less than 70 deaths, followed by Anambra with at least 40 deaths and Enugu, Abia and Ebonyi accounting for the remaining 30 deaths. Among the not less than seventy defenseless civilian deaths recorded in the hands of armed non-state actors in Imo State, at least 45 including women and children were killed in four communities in Orsu Local Government Area where many of them were mowed down and inflicted with savagely machet cuts and gun attacks.

Their gruesome murder had taken place between Jan 5 and 8, 2025, during which, according to eyewitnesses spoken to by the Intersociety, eighteen defenseless persons including women and children were mowed down in Ihenansa, eight in Eziawa, nine in Umuhu-Okabia, six in Ebenato and one person in Awo-Idemmili. The killings have since continued including killing of at least two persons on Tuesday, January 28, 2025, in Orsu-Ihiteukwa part of the Local Government Area. In Anambra State, the not less than 40 killed included at least ten in Ihiala on December 30, 2024; during which a Reverend Father was days earlier shot and killed in the area. A female banker was also among those killed in the State during the period as well as scores of others abducted by kidnappers and killed in their dens.

The security forces including military personnel, police crack squads and sub-state actor killer vigilantes accounted for not less than 100 civilian deaths across the South-East during the period. The not less than 100 civilian deaths in the hands of the security forces represented those killed outside the law or due process and their killings 'weaponized' to justify their atrocious killing. Among them are not less than 60 killed under questionable circumstances by the Nigerian Military in January 2025 alone. The Nigerian Military's Defense Headquarters had on Friday, January 31, announced that "its Operation Udoka killed 41 terrorists in South-East in January 2025, during which 57 others were arrested" (<https://www.starnews.com.ng/nigerian-military-eliminates-358-terrorists-arrests-431-in-january-dhq/>). It is the strong belief of the Intersociety that out of the 41 reported killings by the Defense Headquarters, the actual figure is most likely to be not less than 60. The Intersociety had found in its Special International Report of December 22, 2024 that over 90% of civilian killings linked to the Nigerian Military were carried out outside the law and due process which amount to extra jus, extralegal and extrajudicial executions. Other killings by security forces included eight recently killed in Imo State by police crack squads and another eight killed by the Anambra Vigilante Service on Tuesday, Jan 28, 2025 in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State; as well as scores of others abducted by military personnel and police crack squads who are unlikely to come back alive.

270 Defenseless Civilians Abducted In December 2024 And January 2025:

The Nigerian Security Forces (military personnel, police crack squads and sub-state actor killer vigilantes), the Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen and allied others, 'Street Violent Criminal Entities' and armed Counterfeit Biafra Agitators have separately been responsible for abduction of no fewer than 200 members of the South-East civilian population across the Region in the past two of December 2024 and January 2025; out of which about 160 were abducted by armed non-state actors and 110 others abducted and taken to unknown destinations outside the knowledge of their families and official records. Many of the 110 security forces abductees or about 70 belonged to those taken away and outside the law by military personnel while the remaining 40 ones got missing in the hands of police crack squads and killer vigilantes. The Nigerian Military's Defense Headquarters had on Friday, January 31, 2025, announced that "its Operation UDOKA arrested 57 terrorist suspects and killed 41 others (<https://www.starnews.com.ng/nigerian-military-eliminates-358-terrorists-arrests-431-in-january-dhq/>)". Out of "57 arrestees", announced by Defense Headquarters in South-East and January 2025 alone, the actual figure is most likely to be not less than 70; out of which, 98% of their families are not aware of where they are being held; exposing most of them to high risk of not returning to their families alive.

The Intersociety's "Ocean Of Innocent Blood Flowing In Eastern Nigeria" of December 22, 2024, had found that more than 98% of those arrested by the Nigerian Military in the South-East and some parts of the South-South were arrested outside the law and knowledge of their families and official records; thereby exposing them to high risk of abductions and enforced disappearances, capable of making them end up as victims of extra jus, extralegal and extrajudicial executions or secret killings or executions. It must be clarified that killing members of civilian population or unarmed citizens suspected to have offended criminal law, before or after their arrest is a serious criminal offense in Nigeria and under international law.

Weaponization of crime detection and law enforcement operations is also a serious criminal offense; likewise, killings involving sub-state actor vigilantes disempowered by law to kill, detain, investigate and prosecute. Arresting civilian citizens and taking them away without the knowledge of their families and outside official records clearly amount to enforced disappearances which could lead to extrajudicial, extra jus and extralegal executions.

Further, the breakdown of the abduction of estimated 160 defenseless civilians of the South-East Trado-Judeo-Christian faith and extraction by armed non-state actors across the South-East in the past two months of December 2024 and January 2025 included estimated 60 abducted in Anambra State, 50 abducted in Imo State, 40 abducted in Enugu State and the rest abducted in other parts of the South-East. Also observed was the fact that more than 95% of the 160 abductees by armed non-state actors were forced to pay ransoms through their relatives, friends and associates. In Anambra State where at least 60 were abducted, Aguata, Orumba North and Orumba South accounted for not less than 30 including a retired Anglican Bishop, two Catholic nuns, seven persons abducted between Ezinifite, Igboukwu and Uga, six persons abducted between Amesi and Umuchu, one abducted at Amaokpala, etc. Imo State with not less than 50 abductees included those abducted for ransom along the State's highways and its troubled local government areas and communities. In Enugu State with at least 40 abductees, the most noticeable was the abduction on January 13, 2025 of at least 40 travelers by Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen in Enugu-Ezike part of the Igbo Eze Local Government Area.

There is likelihood of others representing "dark figures of crime" involving unrecorded victims abducted by Jihadists and other criminal entities on their way to 2024 Christmas and 2025 New Year holidays or while returning from to their bases from the same particularly along the highways. Other victims were those recorded in the remaining parts of the South-East especially along their highways.

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