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THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF BIAFRA (IPOB) SIT-AT-HOME ORDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE SOUTHEAST NIGERIA (2021-2023)

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Abstract
The study appraised the prevalent incidences of the sit-at-home order of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in Southeast Nigeria. Essentially, the study established how the enforcement of the unlawful order contributed to the gross violations of rights of residents in the region between 2021 and 2023. The study which is both qualitative and descriptive, gathered data from various documentary evidence, and adopted Systems theory as expounded by Talcott Parsons and David Easton as its framework of analysis. Findings from the data presentation and analysis showed that the IPOB sit-at-home order forms part of the strategies in the bid to actualize the sovereign state Biafra. The study also revealed that the weekly enforcement of the unlawful order grossly violated the social, economic and political rights of residents in Southeast Nigeria. Against this backdrop, the study recommends the need for political restructuring and power rotation formula or mechanism in a way that guarantees equal or fair rotation of presidential power among the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria; and also the need for the Nigerian government to foster national cohesion and engage in diplomatic dialogue with the leaders of the Indigenous People of Biafra, as well the leaders of the five states in the Southeast of Nigeria. In addition, the federal government of Nigeria should obey court orders pertaining to freeing Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, the leader and founder of the IPOB.

Key Words: *Indigenous People of Biafra, Human Rights, Human Rights Violations, Sit-At-Home Order.*

Introduction
The emergence of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) is a consequence of the historical and persistent struggle for Biafra, resulting from claims of marginalization and social exclusion of the Igbos in Southeast Nigeria by the federal government of Nigeria. This perceived marginalization was previously traceable to the civil war which lasted for nearly three years in Nigeria; that is, between July 6, 1967 and January 15, 1970. The said war was also known as the Nigerian-Biafran civil war or the Biafran civil war. To be sure, it was a civil war fought between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Sovereign State of Biafra- a secessionist state or region that declared its independence from Nigeria on the 30th of May 1967. Accordingly, the Nigerian forces were led by

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General Yakubu Gowon, while the Biafran forces were led by Late Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu. As observed in Daly (2020), Biafra represents the nationalist aspirations of the Igbo ethnic group, whose leadership felt that they could no longer co-exist with Nigeria, particularly as the Nigerian government appeared dominated by the interests of the Hausa-Fulanis' and the Muslims in Northern Nigeria. The plethora of political, economic, ethnic, cultural and religious tensions and the concomitant crisis of the period precipitated the secession of Biafra from Nigeria, and in turn, the civil war. Undoubtedly, there are several remote and immediate factors that culminated into Biafran secession, but the most immediate cause was a scenario of wanton violence against the Igbos. It therefore followings that in January 1966, a group of five Majors in the Nigerian Army staged a coup, overthrowing the civilian government, under a seeming pretext of ending corruption, and about six months later, some military men of Northern extraction staged a counter-coup and enthroned General Yakubu Gowon as the Head of State. Emboldened by the coup, the political elites and some elements from Northern Nigeria unleashed a long history of socio-political resentment against the Igbos, resulting to serious violent crisis in the North where over ten thousand people were killed. Along this line, Anthony (2002), noted that there was a failure on the part of the Nigerian government to stop the incessant killings, thereby making millions of the Igbos to flee the region,

Consequently, the Eastern Nigeria was overwhelmed by the fleeing Igbos from the North who were all gripped by fear. Consequent upon these sad existential threatening challenges, Col. Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu declared the secession of Biafra, citing the fact that the federal government of Nigeria has failed to protect the lives and general interests of the Southeasterners; however, the federal government of Nigeria vehemently opposed the secession of Biafra, as they fear that allowing such secession will motivate other ethnic groups or regions to equally secede or exit from the Nigerian federation. Also, the Eastern part of Nigeria possesses a large chunk of Nigeria's oil reserves. Accordingly, rather than allowing the secession of Biafra, the federal government of Nigeria embarked on strong military action to reclaim the Eastern part of Nigeria, and this resulted to the Nigeria civil war (Matumara, 2009). The Nigerian government succeeded, and was able to restore and reintegrate the Eastern Nigeria as part of the Nigerian federation. As a result of the persistent abuse of power by the Nigerian government through the instrumentality of social exclusion, marginalization and coercive measures meted on the Igbos, the Movement for Actualization of Sovereign People of Biafra (MASSOB) was for formed in 1999 by Ralph Uwazuruike, with the aim of engendering Igbo nationalism, as well as ensuring the actualization of the State of Biafra, (Heerten & Moses, 2014); and subsequently, the Indigenous People of Biafra was formed in the year 2012 by Mazi Nnamdi Kanu as a movement against the perceived marginalization meted to the Southeast Nigeria, and as well as towards achieving Biafran Independence (Esho, 2022). Accordingly, the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) has come up with series of tactics in the bid for the actualization of Biafra, with little or no regards for the socio-political and economic rights of Southeast residents and Nigerian citizens at large. Some of those tactics include, inter alia, media attacks and propaganda against the Nigerian government; and just recently, the sit-at-home order, (Ozibo & Okorie, 2022).

Admittedly, the sit-at-home order of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) which has largely gained the attention of Nigerians since its commencement around June 29, 2021, is more or less a strategic tool employed by the group in facilitating the release of the Mazi Nnamdi Kanu (the founder and leader of the IPOB) from the detention occasioned by the Nigeria government, as well as in also actualizing Biafra. Prior to his arrest, the IPOB leader have severally been reported to have been attacking the Nigerian government through the media outside the country; hence, he was consequently arrested and charged of treasonable felony (Ozibo & Okorie, 2022). As observed in Owoeye, Ezeanya and Obiegbunam (2022), since the apprehension of the IPOB leader, the sit-at-home order and its strict enforcement has been embraced by the group, as a major strategy employed in responding to the arrest of their leader. The order is observed mostly on Mondays and other important or significant days in the annals of Biafran struggle, as a way of demonstrating. In a similarly vein, Ugwu (2023) contends that sit-at-home enforcement was introduced by the IPOB spokesperson in August 2021 across all these states in Southeast Nigeria in order to facilitate the release of Nnamdi Kanu from detention. There is however no gainsaying that rather than being a tool in facilitating the release of Mazi Nnamdi Kanu and in the actualization of Biafra, the weekly enforcement of the sit-at-home order has over the last couple of years, constituted another dynamic of threats to human rights, and has continued to violate the fundamental human rights of the Igbos and residents of Southeast Nigeria, occasioning severe consequences on their socio-political and economic rights. It is therefore the attendant challenges of the weekly enforcement the unlawful sit-at-home order and its concomitant adverse effects on the human rights of residents in Southeast Nigeria that ignited the need for the study.

Statement of the Problem

The persistent unlawful enforcement of the sit-at-home order, mostly on Mondays, across the five states in Southeast Nigeria by the members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and its supporters has not only attracted the attention of the Federal government of Nigeria and citizens, but has equally drawn the attention of international bodies, sequel to the plethora of local and foreign reportages on the subject matter. According to Owoeye, Ezeanya and Obiegbunam (2022), Southeast Nigeria has continued to witness a lot of challenges from the weekly sit-at-home order since the apprehension of Nnamdi Kanu in July 2021; consequently, for about three years, the IPOB has continued to enforce the sit-at-home order every week, in a bid to facilitate the release of its leader from the detention, and also in a bid to actualize Biafra.

It is instructive to note that the violent enforcement of the sit-at-home order on every Monday of the week since July 2021 has occasioned dire and destructive consequences on the residents of the Southeast in relation to the safety of their lives and property. Undoubtedly, since the inception of the weekly sit-at-home, many Nigerian citizens in Southeast Nigeria have lost their lives in the coerce enforcement of the unlawful order, hence, negating their social and natural rights as individuals and as citizens. Furthermore, the weekly enforcement of the order has caused adverse effects on the socio-economic rights of the Southeast residents, as rights to move freely and reside or do business throughout Nigeria or any part thereof, as guaranteed in section 41 of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria (as amended), is being denied and eroded. Strictly speaking, the

continued enforcement of the unlawful order has adversely restricted engagement in commercial activities in the region, and has equally occasioned limitations on the rights to education and suchlike rights.

In relation to socio-political rights, the region since the commencement of the enforcement of the unlawful order, has consistently witnessed various disruptions of political activities, violent threats to elections, gross violations of freedom of movement and the right to vote across the region. There is therefore no gainsaying that the insecurity situations fueled by the weekly sit-at-home enforcement in the Southeast has largely negated the observance of fundamental human rights in the region. It is on the basis of the foregoing challenges that the paper sets out to hinge evaluation on the situation, and interrogate how the continued enforcement of the sit-at-home order has contributed to the violation of the human rights of residents in Southeast of Nigeria.

Literature Review

Conceptual Review

Indigenous People of Biafra and Sit-at-home Order

The common thread that appears to run across the various conceptualizations of the Indigenous People of Biafra by scholars is the definitional view that the formation of the group is geared towards the actualization of Biafra. Since its formation, IPOB has been viewed by various literature to underscore a separatist or secessionist agitation for Biafra. Accordingly, the group was formed in 2012 as a reformed pro-secessionist group that will complement the efforts of the seeming weakening already existing groups, to wit, Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra and Biafra Zonist Movement, vis-à-vis the actualization of Biafra (Obiora & David, 2020). Along this line, the formation of Indigenous People of Biafra is hinged on the recurrent struggle for self-determination by the Igbos or the people of the Southeast region. As observed in Onwuka (2021), the sit-at-home order was declared by the members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) following the arrest of leader of IPOB; Mazi Nnnamdi Kanu by the Federal government of Nigeria. Consequently, the group declared the enforcement of weekly sit-at-home order in the Southeast region, particularly on Mondays and on any other day they deem fit, until their leader regains freedom from detention. As stated in the Nigerian Tribune (2022, June 1), Indigenous People of Biafra usually declares any day their leader appears in court, a sit-at-home day and any time it deems fit. In a similar vein, Mark, Obi and Chibuzor (2022) contends that the IPOB sit-at-home order started as an annual event to remember lost lives during the Nigeria-Biafra civil war and later transformed to become a tool of attention and facilitation of the release of Nnamdi Kanu. It further contends that the unlawful order has occasioned disruptive and destructive implications on various theatres of life in the region. Consequently, residents of the Southeast Nigeria observe the sit-at-home order in a seemingly forced solidarity with the cause; however, the continued observance has inflicted pains and several adverse implications on business operations, livelihoods of individuals and rights of people.

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Human Rights

Basically, human rights have been viewed from various theoretical perspectives by scholars across disciplines, however, there has been no universally agreed definition of the concept, nevertheless, there is a common thread that runs across the scholarly views pertaining to human rights to the effect that it denotes entitlements or privileges and freedom that every individual is entitled to, by the virtue of being human. As observed in Kirchschlaeger (2014), human rights connotes the essential elements and core areas of human existence which is necessary for survival of human lives. Along this line, human rights include those rights that are ascribed to every member of human race, regardless of skin colour, nationality, age, social standing, gender, among other things. Kirchschlaeger (2014) further stated that human rights as part of every legal system, and that individuals living thereof are entitled to these rights. Admittedly, while the first definitional view which considered human rights as intrinsic and indispensable attributes of human existence must be taken proper cognizance of, the second definitional view appears to have failed to acknowledge the fact that human rights are universal and beyond legal rights, as it covers social, political, religious and economic facets.

Similarly, Aduba (2012) considered human rights as the very indispensable aspect of human existence. He further maintained that human rights are not to be taken away or given up as they are inalienable. There is therefore no hierarchy among rights, and no human right can be suppressed in order to promote another right. Accordingly, Thangavel (2023) opined that human rights are more or less a form of common heritage or common language of humanity, and internationally protected rights which exists beyond domestic jurisdiction of the states. In this regard, human rights are not limited to a certain state or nation as it covers every right to which every human in any part of the world is entitled to, by virtue of being a human being. He outlined some of the rights to include right to freedom of religion, right against exploitation, right to cultural and educational rights, as well as right to constitutional remedies. According to Yusuf (2006), human rights depict a condition in which individual's rights should neither be invaded nor violated by any government institutions, authority or organization or individuals. In this regard, human rights are natural and should not be violated by individuals or institutions. Human rights are also considered as a set of norms governing the treatment of individuals and groups by states and non-state actors on the basis of ethical principles regarding what society considers fundamental to a decent life. Accordingly, he further contends that the norms governing the treatment of human beings are incorporated into national and international legal system which ensures the mechanisms and procedures to hold the duty-bearers accountable and provide redress for alleged victims of human rights violations.

Beyond individual definitional views, the United Nations (UN) described human rights as the rights inherent to all humans regardless of sex, race, nationality, religion, ethnic, language among others. In a similar vein, African Charter on Human Rights considered human rights as inviolable rights of human beings. As further maintained by the organization, every human being is entitled to respect for his life and the integrity of his person which must not be arbitrarily violated. Along this line, Ozoigbo (2017) considered human rights as the basic rights and freedom accruable to every individual in the world, from birth until death, and applied irrespective of nationality, residence, sex, ethnic

background, among other things. On the other hand, Mangala (2013) observed that human rights can be operationalized within the context of one's citizenship, rights and liberties enjoyed by virtue of belonging to a sovereign state. He further asserts that these rights could be right to life, association, to vote and be voted for, to own and control property, religion and the enjoyment of the dividends of democratic government. To this end, when human rights become limited, preconditions for violations and abuse are created. In Nigerian context, human rights have often been unduly limited, violated and abused by both state and non-state actors. Lastly, it is worthy to note that those human rights or rights that are particularly enshrined in a constitution, as Nigeria has in chapter four of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended), are specifically referred to as fundamental rights.

Theoretical Framework

System Theory

In analyzing this study, systems theory was adopted. The choice of the theory is borne out of its relevance and applicability to the study. Accordingly, the development of systems theory is traceable to the period between 1950s and 1960s as a framework in explaining the empirical world system. The major thrust of the theory in the world of social sciences and political science is manifested in the proposition of Talcott Parsons (a functionalist-sociologist) and David Easton (a renowned Political Scientist) respectively. Other scholars who expounded the theory and contributed to its development include David Singer, Morton Kaplan, Charles McClelland and Karl Deutsch.

In David Easton's analysis of the theory, the input represents the totality of demands or pressures placed on the political system by the environment that needs to be attended to. For this reason, various demands will be taken into consideration based on their importance or value by the gatekeepers. The considered demands will go into the political system for policy formulation and implementation while others will be communicated back to the environment in form of feedback; a way of making the citizens know that the system is yet to meet all their demands. According to David Easton, every political system is made up of system with component parts, thus, each component part has a vital role to play for effective and efficient performance of the whole. As observed in Akinboye and Ottoh (2005), each subsystem, no matter how less important it seems must not be left out; each component of the system has its own unique role to perform. Similarly, Talcott Parsons argued that every social system must have the capacity to maintain itself against a hostile environment, which could be sometimes disastrous. Along this line, every socio-political environment is unique as portrayed by other system theorists, particularly David Easton, because systems' environment is characterized by various interest of various socio-political and ethnic groups, resulting to chaos, conflict of interest, crises, excessive demands, and disintegration, all of which serve as pressures on the system; thus, every system must have the capacity to maintain a stability or equilibrium, irrespective of the disturbances from its environment. The social system, political system or international system's environment are not static consequent upon various problems such as terrorism, conflict; among other things that arise every day. Therefore, the system must always maintain itself by adjusting, adapting and also

responding to the changes that take place in the system's environment, otherwise, it will lead to disintegration or total failure of the system.

The application of System theory in the study is to the effect that it is capable of x-raying or exploring the relationship between the activities of the IPOB (a sub-part of Nigerian political system) and its demands or pressure on the Southeast geo-political zone, a part of the Nigerian political system. According to the underlying assumptions of the system theory, the problem with one part of the system or sub-system may affect the overall performance of the function of the system as an active whole or spread to affect the other part of the system. In view of this, the persistent activities of the IPOB separatist group, along with its *modus operandi* covering all five states in Southeast Nigeria is due to the failure of the Nigerian government to adequately respond to the demands and pressures from its political system's environment. Consequently, the problem within the Southeast, as a sub-part of the Nigerian political system has the tendency of escalating to other regions of Nigeria, or even continue to affect the entire political system as a whole. Consequently, the failure of the Nigerian government to respond to the pressures placed on its political system by the IPOB through the enforcement of sit-at-home order has become a serious menace that has threatened and violated the rights of the residents in the Southeast Nigeria, as evident in their failure to exercise their economic, social and political rights whenever the unlawful order is enforced. All these have continued to shape the security perception and relations of Nigerians from other geo-political zones on the Southeast. The gross human rights violation arising from the enforcement of the sit-at-home order of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) has continued to contribute to the failure of Nigeria in observing and safeguarding the fundamental human rights of her citizens, which have been battered by the enforcement of the IPOB sit-at-home order; this in turn has the tendency of adversely affecting the whole system, thereby leading to disintegration and avoidance of all the Southeast states by other regions. The theory considers the involvement of the Nigerian government to the uprising in a bid to avoid a total disintegration of its political system.

Empirical Evaluations

IPOB sit-at-home Order and Economic rights of the Southeast Residents

The discourse in this sub-theme borders on the negative impact of the activities of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in relation to the unlawful enforcement of weekly sit-at-home order on the economic rights of the residents in the Southeast geo-political zone of Nigeria in recent years. The indicators here cover the right to business operations, ownership and control of properties, engagement in commercial activities, among other things.

As reported by Sahara Reporters (2021), the sit-at-home order has resulted in the restriction of commercial activities every Monday in most parts of the Southeast region, while the rights of the residents in the region to engage in socio-economic activities are denied during the weekly enforcement. By implication, the Monday sit-at-home strategy of the Indigenous People of Biafra has grossly violated the social and economic rights of residents of the Southeast. A report by Obianeri (2023, July) disclosed that the weekly enforcement of the IPOB sit-at-home order has resulted in destruction of valuable

property with devastating effect on the socio-economic rights and activities of the people in Southeast Nigeria. Part of the report reads thus, "Insecurity in the region has had deleterious and devastating impacts on the socio-economic rights and development, livelihood, well-being and civic freedoms". As further observed in the report, the enforcement of the weekly sit-at-home by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) has ruined the economy of the Southeast region, and violated the economic rights of the people most of whom depend on daily earning, thereby contributing to poverty and misery as well as another dimension of human rights abuse.

Similarly, Aligwekwe (2022) observed that the activities of the Indigenous People of Biafra pertaining to the enforcement of the weekly sit-at-home order has a negative significant impact on the economic rights of the residents of Southeast region, with individuals and organizations closing their business as a result of the observance of the unlawful order. In essence, the weekly shut down of business activities on the first business day of the week (Monday) in the region has continued to violate the rights of the resident to do their lawful businesses and control their properties. This gross violation of economic rights thereof has continued to drive away investors from the region and to safer environments, (Anele & Eke, 2022). In line with the foregoing, the report of Owuamanam, Eleweke, Willie, Charles, Umo and Labaran (2022) equally affirmed that during the weekly enforcement of sit-at-home order; business operators are forced to close down their shops, and schools are not permitted to open during the observance of the sit-at-home, while hospitality industries, particularly hotels often discourage lodgers or customers from stepping in or coming out of their hotels on every enforcement day of the sit-at-home. By implication, the enforcement of the unlawful order does not only violate the economic rights of the people in the region to do their lawful businesses and own or control their property, but equally thwart their social rights, generally.

It is along this line that Okojie (2023) also contended that the persistent activities of the IPOB in relation to the enforcement of its sit-at-home order have continued to stifle both small and medium enterprises in Southeast region. Little wonder the International Centre for Investigative Reporting estimated that the annual loss as a result of the sit-at-home order in the region is at about 4.6 trillion Naira, having used the most recent report by the National Bureau of Statistics, and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency. The report of the Nigerian Tribune (2021, June 1) also averred that the weekly enforcement of the Monday sit-at-home order has negative implications for socio-economic rights of the residents in the region, as all economic or commercial activities are grounded across Southeast Nigeria. Part of the report reads in part, to wit, "there were deserted streets, locked shops and offices, shut markets, malls, plazas and filling stations in Awka, Umaiha, Aba, Enugu, Abakiliki, Nsukka, Owerri". Another part of the report also reads; "….in Enugu; major markets, including Mayor, Garki, Ogige, Ogbete and New Market, were all shut, just as banks, other financial institutions, shops, malls and newspaper distribution axis did not open for business". Taking cognizance of these reports; it is evident that the weekly enforcement of the IPOB sit-home order has limited the rights of the people in the region from participating in their daily businesses.

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Figure 1: Business operators were denied their socio-economic rights due to the enforcement of Monday sit-at-home order by the IPOB



Source: Owoeye, Ezeanya & Obiegbunam (2021).

The pictures in Figure 1 depict the gross violation of human rights of business operators and residents in Southeast Nigeria during the enforcement of weekly sit-at-home order in the region. As revealed in the Figure, people were denied the rights to participate in the economic activities or the right to do, as various retail shops, markets, among other things, were closed as a result of the enforcement of the unlawful order.

IPOB Sit-at-home Order and the Socio-political rights of Southeast Residents

The focus of the discourse at this juncture is to x-ray the impact of the activities of Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in relation to the enforcement of the sit-at-home order on the social and political rights of Southeast residents. Analysis herein will thence border on the right to freedom of movement, right to life, right to education, and right to participate in political activities. From the foregoing, a report published by Sahara Reporters (2021, November 15) contends that the activities of the Indigenous People of Biafra vis-à-vis the enforcement of weekly sit-at-home order has created fear, lack of security, and reduced confidence in the mind of students in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in the Southeast. Taking cognizance of the report, it is worthy to state that the enforcement of the unlawful sit-at-home order has restricted the residents of the region from right to education, as schools close every time the sit-at-home order is being observed across all the five states in Southeast Nigeria.

A report by This Day, Online, cited in Owoeye, Ezeanya and Obiegbunam (2022), the activities of the Indigenous People of Biafra pertaining to the weekly enforcement of Monday sit-at-home order has continued to violate the social rights of the residents in

Southeast Nigeria. It further observed that there is always restriction to movement from one place to another, as inter-state transportation is adversely affected, and educational activities are seriously debased, as schools and students in the region are forced to observe the sit-at-home every Monday. In a similar vein, Ogbonnaya, Nwosu and Ogbodo-Iwuagwu (2021) also contends that the enforcement of the weekly sit-at-home order has devastating effect on the social rights of the youths in the region as their educational rights are grossly violated at the course of the enforcement of the unlawful order. They went further to state that one of the instances was the incident where students of a Comprehensive High School in Njaba community area of Imo State were writing their English Language during the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and gunmen, identified as the members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) struck and attacked the students and moderators of the examination consequent upon the enforcement of the unlawful sit-at-home order. By implication, the students' rights to participate in the educational activities were grossly violated as a result of the forceful observance of the sit-at-home order. Furthermore, a report by Sahara Reporter (2021, May 30) disclosed that some gunmen, suspected to be members of the Indigenous People of Biafra set ablaze the office of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), located at Okwudor community in Njaba Local Government Area of Imo State. Some parts of the report read thus, "Although no life was lost, electoral material, office equipment and furniture were burnt in the incident…..the attack comes less than seven days after INEC office in Ahiazu Mbaise Local Government Area of the State was vandalized. It is also the eight INEC offices to be attacked in Imo State".

Again, as report by Daily Trust (2022, December 13), the Headquarters of the Independent National Electoral Commission along Port Harcourt Road in Imo state came under attack on during the enforcement of weekly sit-at-home order by the members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). Part of the report reads as follows:
…the headquarters of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) along Port Harcourt Road, Imo State, came under attack on Monday by gunmen suspected to be members of the banned Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). This is the third attack on the Commission's offices in less than two weeks after earlier attack on its offices in Orlu LGA on December 1 and Orlu West LGA office on December 4…the attack is not unconnected with the Monday sit-at-home order by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) to protest the continued incarceration of their leader, Nnamdi Kanu. The attack on the electoral umpire's head office may hamper the smooth distribution of permanent voter cards. They threw bombs at the roof of the INEC building in the attack, which occurred at 3am Monday (Daily Trust, December 13, 2022).

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Figure 2: Electoral materials, voters' card and facilities burnt at INEC offices across Southeast Nigeria

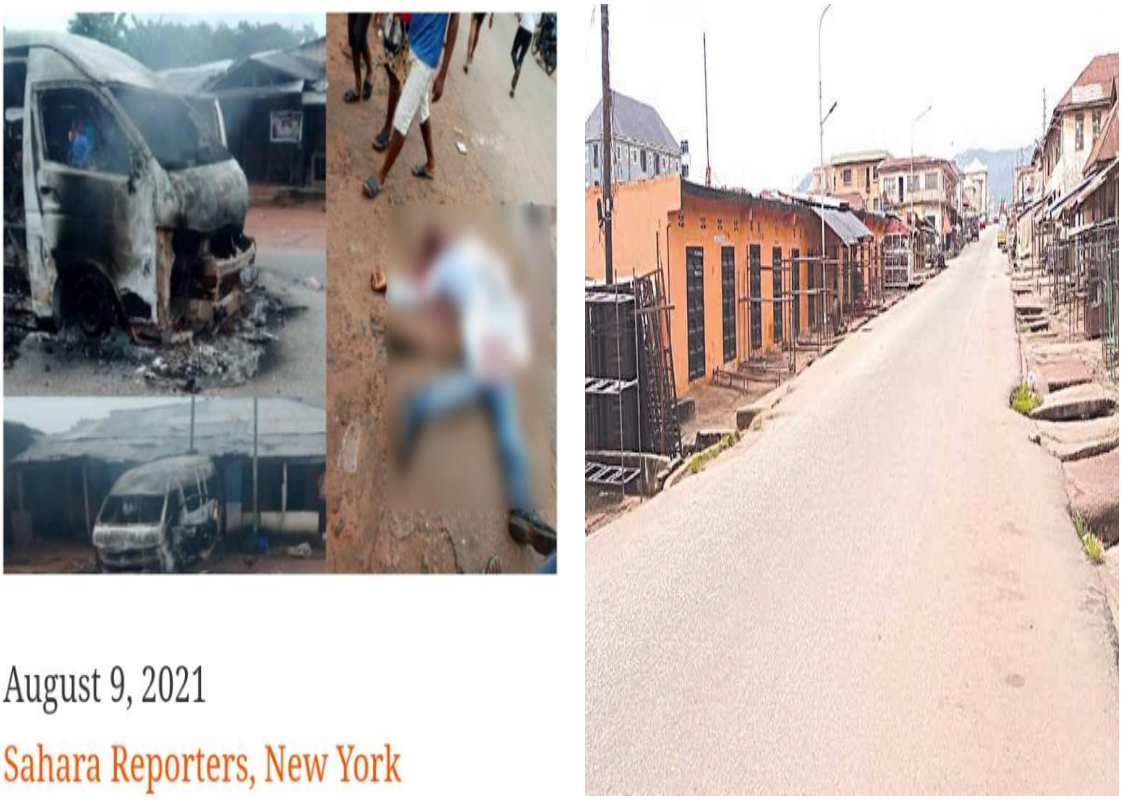


Source: Daily Trust (December 13, 2022); Sahara Reporters (2021, August 9).

The images in Figure 2 exhibit typical evidence of gross violations of the political rights of residents in the Southeast Nigeria by the enforcers of the IPOB Monday sit-at-home. By implication, many people who have not collected their voter's card would not be able to cast their vote in elections and this is a negation of their political rights. In other words, this constitutes another dimension of gross violation of political rights of the occupants of the Southeast geopolitical zone of Nigeria by the enforcers of the sit-at-home order of the Indigenous People of Biafra.

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Figure 3: People were killed, vehicles set ablaze, main roads were deserted as IPOB members enforce sit-at-home order



Adeshina (2021); Sahara Reporter (2021, August 9).

The data presented in Figure 3 depict another incident of an attack by the members of IPOB, enforcing the sit-at-home in the Southeast which resulted in the lost lives of two persons, burning of vehicles, coupled with the total closure of markets and commercial activities, with major roads deserted, including public places. By implication, the extra-judicial killings, restriction of movements, and burning of commercial vehicles are all contrary to the socio-economic rights of individuals.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Essentially, the researcher embarked on the study sequel to the menace occasioned through the instrumentality of the sit-at-home order weekly observed and enforced by non-state actors (the IPOB) in the immediate environment of the researcher. Accordingly, the paper is geared towards examining the effect of the sit-at home on the human rights of residents in Southeast Nigeria. From the data presented and analyzed hereinabove, it is evident that the enforcement of IPOB sit-at-home order in the region has grossly violated the social, economic and political rights of the people in the Southeast. For these reasons, an urgent solution is required in order to end the sit-at-home in Southeast of Nigeria which has become a serious threat to the human rights of the people.

Based on findings from data hereinabove presented and analyzed; the following recommendations are made:

a. The relevant government and political stakeholders or institutions are charged to urgently effect a political restructure of Nigeria, and also ensure power rotation mechanism in way that ensures equal rotation of presidential power among the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. This will ensure all-inclusive governance.
b. The Nigerian government should engage in diplomatic and national cohesion dialogue with the leaders of the Indigenous People of Biafra, as well the leaders of the five states in Southeast Nigeria.
c. The federal government of Nigeria is admonished to obey all court orders relating to freeing Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, the leader and founder of the IPOB.

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