



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

Nigeria - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Friday 5 & Monday 8 August 2016

Information on the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) including legal status

Agence France Presse in June 2016 states that the:

“...Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) movement...has revived calls for an independent homeland for the Igbo people in southeast Nigeria... IPOB has staged regular demonstrations across the southeast since the arrest in October last year of its leader...” (*Agence France Presse* (10 June 2016) *Amnesty backs Biafra group's shooting claims*).

A report issued in June 2016 by *Amnesty International* points out that:

“...since August 2015, there have been at least five similar incidents in Onitsha alone where the police and military shot unarmed IPOB members and supporters” (*Amnesty International* (10 June 2016) *Nigeria: Killing of unarmed pro-Biafra supporters by military must be urgently investigated*).

A mention of the IPOB included in an article published by *Vanguard* in June 2016 notes the government describing it

“...as “an unlawful society” “ (*Vanguard* (6 May 2016) *Biafra: A-Court reserves judgment on Kanu, others' appea*).

In April 2016 *Agence France-Presse* states in a report that:

“IPOB was founded by Nnamdi Kanu, who is currently on trial for treason in a high-profile case in Abuja” (*Agence France-Presse* (10 April 2016) *Nigeria blames Biafra group after dozens found in shallow graves*).

A report issued in December 2015 the *Society for Threatened Peoples* states in a report that:

“The Society for Threatened Peoples accuses the Nigerian government in Abuja of criminalizing Biafra-activists instead of entering a political dialogue – despite ongoing mass protests. “The controversy over the punishment of the Director of Radio Biafra, Nnamdi Kanu, shows that Nigeria's politicians prefer to shortsightedly rely on intimidation instead of dealing with the backgrounds of the rebellion...Because of his critical reports and his commitment to strengthen the ethnic group of the Ibo in eastern Nigeria, former Biafra, the journalist is accused of conspiracy, intimidation and being a member of an illegal organization” (*Society for Threatened Peoples* (21 December 2015) *Nigeria: Continued controversy over the punishment of Biafra-activists*).

Agence France Presse in December 2015 points out that:

“Nigerian prosecutors have filed fresh charges against a Biafran activist just days after a court ordered his release, court officials said Wednesday. Nnamdi Kanu,

leader of the outlawed Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB), has been held by the Department of State Services (DSS), the country's secret police, since his arrest in October for operating pirate Radio Biafra and belonging to an unlawful organisation” (Agence France Presse (23 December 2015) *Nigeria slaps fresh charges on Biafran activist*).

References

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any

particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

Sources Consulted

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