leaders emerged not merely over material wealth.

Farmer's death sparks protest in Ondo community, security agencies mobilised

Hakeem Gbadamosi | Akure

RESIDENTS of Ayede Ogbese community in Akure North Local Government area of Ondo State, on Tuesday, blocked the ever-busy Akure–Owo expressway over what they described as worsening insecurity in the area.

The protesters barricaded sections of the highway in the early hours of the day, causing heavy traffic congestion and leaving commuters stranded for hours.

Motorists, passengers and other road users were forced to seek alternative routes as the protest brought activities along the corridor to a temporary standstill.

According to community members, the protest followed a recent attack on a farmer who was reportedly assaulted by suspected gunmen while returning from his farm.

The residents said the victim sustained injuries and eventually died, heightening fears among farmers and traders who depend on the surrounding forest routes for their livelihoods.

Armed with placards of various inscriptions such as 'Ayede Ogbese is not safe,' 'We need government intervention,' and 'Stop the attacks now,' the protesters expressed frustration over the recurring incidents of kidnapping and violent crimes in the community.

They lamented that insecurity had disrupted farming activities, reduced evening movements, and created an atmosphere of constant anxiety.

Some community leaders, who addressed the crowd, said the protest was peaceful and intended solely to draw urgent attention from authorities, noting that repeated appeals to relevant agencies had not yielded the desired results, leaving residents feeling abandoned and vulnerable.

They called on the state government to prioritise the safety of Ayede Ogbese by deploying more security personnel and establishing a permanent security post within the community,and put in place regular patrols along farm routes and surrounding forests to deter criminal elements.

Security operatives were later deployed to the area to monitor the situation and ensure that the protest did not escalate into violence.

Meanwhile, the state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) Abayomi Jimoh, confirmed the attack and assured residents that investigations were ongoing.

He urged members of the public to refrain from blocking highways or engaging in actions capable of disrupting public peace, noting that such measures could endanger lives and property.

In the mean time, the government has ordered a strict crackdown on kidnap syndicates following a recent surge in abduction cases across the state, saying some of the criminal activities were orchestrated by locals in the affected areas.

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