

Igboho gives Fulani leaders ultimatum over raising kidnappings, police launch probe

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Yoruba nation activist, Sunday Igboho...Photo Credit: BBC

| By Olufemi Adediran

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Yoruba Nation activist, Sunday Adeyemo, popularly known as Sunday Igboho, on Saturday issued an ultimatum to Fulani community leaders in Igboho town, Oorelope Local Government Area of Oyo State, to facilitate the release of residents reportedly abducted by kidnappers.

A video that went viral on social media earlier on Saturday showed Igboho issuing a two-hour ultimatum for the release of the abductees during a meeting with Fulani leaders and security officials at the palace of the Alepata of Igboholand, Oba Joel Olawuwo.

This was as the Oyo State Police Command said it had begun investigations into the threat.

The activist, who spoke in Yoruba, warned that failure to secure the victims' release within the stipulated period could lead to unrest.

He accused some members of the Fulani community of being behind a series of kidnappings in the area, including the abduction of a pregnant woman, her sister and a child, a few days ago.

Igboho claimed that kidnappers had previously abducted and killed a pregnant woman alongside the person who delivered ransom to secure her release.

“You cannot be kidnapping people in our land. You kidnapped a pregnant woman, demanded ransom and killed the person who brought the ransom. In my fatherland! You are not even afraid of me. Let this be the last and the end.

“My name is Sunday Igboho and I’m not for anybody; I’m for all Igboho indigenes. I can’t be fighting for other communities while you people are perpetrating the same crime in my own town. We have not come to your town to fight you.

“The elders of Igboho town have appealed to me to be patient with you for now, but call yourselves to order. Since they started kidnapping people here, they have never kidnapped a Fulani man. Your children are the ones perpetrating this crime,” he said.

Handing down the ultimatum, Igboho said, “Tell your people that I’m giving them a two-hour ultimatum to produce the woman, her sister and the child they kidnapped. If you don’t produce them within two hours, there will be a crisis. I don’t care where they have taken them to, but I’m speaking here on behalf of all Igboho indigenes and elders that you should produce them within two hours.”

He alleged that those responsible for the kidnappings were known within the community and claimed that the victims were being held at a location in Baani, a settlement within the area.

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“This is enough. I’m giving two hours to call your people and produce those in captivity. We have tracked the kidnappers’ number and know that they are keeping the victims at the Baale’s compound in Baani. Call and tell them to bring the victims here now or else I’m coming over there in the forest reserve to flush them out,” he said.

Igboho further claimed that the kidnappers initially demanded N300m ransom before reducing it to N150m.

He urged Fulani leaders in the town to mobilise efforts towards securing the victims’ freedom, warning that the community would be held responsible if anything happened to them.

“We don’t have any ransom to give you. They started demanding N300m and reduced it to N150m. All the Fulanis in this town should contribute that money and secure the release of those victims. If they kill them in captivity, you are all in trouble,” he warned.

The activist also cautioned the Divisional Police Officer in the area against any alleged complicity with criminal elements.

Addressing the officer directly, Igboho said, “DPO, I want you to be very careful. This is our fatherland and you can’t destroy it for us. You are from Ogbomoso; be very careful. If the Fulanis are giving you money and you are supporting them, you are collecting blood money.”

He also accused some Igboho indigenes of serving as informants to the kidnappers, threatening that he would personally kill anyone conspiring with the criminals.

“Some of our children are also working with the kidnappers. If I apprehend any of them, I will personally kill the person,” he threatened while using his hand to demonstrate how the person would be killed.

Reacting to the development, the Police Public Relations Officer of the Oyo State Police Command, Olayinka Ayanlade, said the command had obtained the viral video and was reviewing it as part of ongoing investigations.

“We have obtained the video and we are currently processing it for investigation,” he said.

The PPRO, however, declined further comments on the issue.