

Ebonyi crisis: Death toll rises to 15

KENNETH OFOMA, Abakaliki

More details on the lingering communal crisis in Onicha and Igboeze communities in Onicha local government area of Ebonyi State, emerged Thursday, as thousands of women from the area stormed the state Government House in protest of alleged killing of no fewer than 15 persons from their area by the police who were said to have carried out series of raids to recover the remains of their two missing officers.

They also expressed dismay over alleged police brutality and harassment of their people, claiming that the police had arrested over 50 persons from the area since the crisis broke out February 2.

The women said ever since youths of the area embarked on a violent demonstration resulting in the destruction of property belonging to high profile political office holders from the area, including, the Deputy Governor, Chigozie Ogbu, and chairman of the state Council of traditional rulers, Eze Agom Eze, the community had known no peace.

In a reaction, however, the police public relations officer of the State Command, ASP Nnudam Frederick denied knowledge of the mass arrest and killing of 15 persons, stating

that "no sane person will go to Onicha and begin to kill, shoot sporadically at people".

The women maintained that the mass arrest by the police was as a result of the killing of two of their men, DSP Wilfred Ekpe and Sgt. Ekpenyong Effum, by the youths of the community, who were protesting alleged insensitivity of the government to the plight of the people.

The demonstrators, among them widows and pregnant women were stopped at the gate to the Government House by the police who pushed and used sticks on them to drive

them away.

The ensuing rampage resulted in most of the women, sustaining serious injuries in the course of their protest, while about four of them appeared almost naked in a move aimed at fully registering their presence.

The women who spoke through one Mrs. Mercy Nwoga, recalled how some students from the area were waylaid on their way to a school inter-house sports and taken away to unknown destination; "up till this moment nothing has been heard about the whereabouts of the students."

PUBLIC NOTICE

THE SHEPHERDS EXCLUSIVE CLUB

This is to inform the general public that an application has been made to the Corporate Affairs Commission for the registration of The Registered Trustees of The Shepherds Exclusive Club under Part C of the companies & Allied Matters Act No.1 of 1990.

Names of Trustees

1. Barrister L. D. Ugo Nwabuisi
2. Mr. Uche Ngonobu
3. Mr. F. K. Ekwueme
4. Chief Tony Okonkwo

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- (a) To serve as a forum for wider friendly interaction amongst members.
- (b) To work for the progress and advancement of members and protect their interest where possible
- (c) To promote and foster understanding, mutual trust, cooperation and unity amongst members, and the society at large
- (d) To serve as a forum for constructive participation of members in local, national and international issues.

Any objections should be forwarded to the Registrar General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 565, Ndola Square, Wuse Zone 5, Abuja, within 28 days from the date of this publication.

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