

Robbers/ kidnappers kill colleague as cattle rearers butcher 2 in Owerri

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NEMESIS and retributive justice may have played itself out in Umuguma Owerri, Imo State capital Tuesday night as two armed robbers/kidnappers shot their colleague to death on their way to their evil adventure over disagreement on an undisclosed issue. The two criminals were later apprehended by the police while they were about to be lynched by angry villagers.

The incident coincided with the killing of a youth from Irette community by Hausa Fulani Cattle rearers who stabbed another to a state of unconsciousness for allegedly eating one of their animals. The second victim of the attack was said to be in critical condition and rushed to nearby hospital. While unconfirmed report said he died later another source maintained that he still receiving treatment.

The notorious armed robbery/kidnapping gang members were said to be on their evil mission when quarrel ensued between

two of them possibly over their modus operandi role to be played by each. It was reliably gathered that two members of the gang conspired and shot their opposing colleague simply identified as Olewuike when he refused to yield to their opinion.

After shooting him, they reportedly carried his body to his house and were about to drop it his premises at Umuguma when some members of the family still awake spotted them and raised alarm that aroused their neighbours, leading to their arrest. They reportedly claimed that Olewuike mistakenly shot himself and died on the spot. While the villagers mobilized to lynch them, men of crack squad patrol team of the state police command stormed the area and arrested the two gang members.

A reliable source from the police command who pleaded for anonymity also told our correspondent that the two gang members have claimed that their colleague mistakenly shot himself and died a situation that warranted

them to take his corpse to his house but in the processes of dumping it they were caught by his family members who attempted to lynch them in anger until the arrival of the patrol team.

Meanwhile, tension has enveloped Irrete community near Owerri following the alleged killing of a youth from the area by Hausa/Fulani cattle rearers for the disappearance of their cow later discovered to have been killed and shared by some youths protesting incessant destruction of their crops by the grazing animals.

Report said the youths had warned the cattle rearers on a number of occasions over the destructive activities of their animals in the area but all fell on deaf ear, a situation that made some of them to conspire and slaughter one of the cows, sharing the meat among themselves.

But the cattle dealers reportedly revenged with daggers and arrows Tuesday evening and allegedly killed one of the indigenes of the area. Unconfirmed report said the second victim of the bloody attack

died later even as another insisted that he was critically injured and is presently receiving treatment in a hospital. The irony of it according to our source is that the victims did not partake in both the alleged killing and eating of the cow.

A combined team of policemen and soldiers were said to have been drafted to the community to avoid further break down of law and order. Also, to avoid possible escalation of the matter, special adviser to the governor on security, Chief George Egu yesterday invited the Hausa community to a meeting on Friday through a release repeatedly aired on radio. Egu also confirmed to *Daily Champion* that only one person was killed in the incident.

Police image maker, Linus Nwaiwu told *Daily Champion* yesterday when contacted that he was yet to be briefed on the two incidents both in Umuguma and Irette. He however, described the killing of the kidnapper by colleagues as a good development.