

'50 Killed, 170 Houses' Razed As Imo Community Boils

No fewer than 50 people have been killed and over 170 houses burnt in renewed onslaught on residents of Izombe in Oguta, Imo State, in...



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No fewer than 50 people have been killed and over 170 houses burnt in renewed onslaught on residents of Izombe in Oguta, Imo State, in the last two weeks.

National President Ohanaeze Youth Council (OYC), Igboayaka O Igboayaka, disclosed this at a press briefing in Owerri, the state capital, this weekend.

He said Izombe and other neighbouring communities such as Agwa, Ejemkwuru, Awa, Akabuo, Mgbele and Ogbaku have been recording incessant security challenges due to the nefarious activities of criminal elements with a code name 'Umuoma' (Good children)"

A video had gone viral where charred remains of bodies and houses allegedly burnt in Izombe communities were seen.

In the text of the briefing he jointly signed with the Secretary General, Ifeanyi Nweke, the national president expressed regret that both the state government and security agencies in the state “kept quiet” while innocent blood were being shed and property with millions of naira destroyed.

The statement said, “Ohanaeze Youth Council noticed, with utmost dismay, the debilitating inability of Gov. Hope Uzodinma’s administration to checkmate the activities of the bandits coupled with military personnel, police and Imo State owned untrained security network called “Ebube-Agu” which has resulted to more casualties and deaths.

“But rather than help to engender peace and tranquility, the security operatives and Ebube-Agu have turned hostile to the residents of the areas particularly, Izombe.

“Unfortunately, the situation has affected socio-economic and other activities as markets, schools and churches have been closed down in Izombe for almost 8 months now.

An indigene of Amakpurudere Izombe village said over 50 natives of his village were killed by these security operatives between June 7 and Monday June 19, 2023.

“Some of the identified people killed at Amakpurudere Village alone included Benjamin Nwadirigbo, Nwabu Onuigbo (aka Danvata), Obieze Ajaere, Izuka Izuaghanwa and Chike Izuaghanwa”

“Witnesses in the community narrated that others were equally killed in other villages of Izombe like Ndiawa, Ndioko, Orsu and Ugbele and Agwa, a neighbouring Community to Izombe.

“The combined team of police, untrained and illegal Ebube-Agu and the military had equally destroyed more than 170 buildings in various villages including over 45 houses in Amakpurudere Village alone”.

“To add more Injuries into the agony of Izombe people, a community source reported that security forces like Ebube-Agu looted people’s property. Lo and behold more than 90% of the residents had fled to safety from their the community.

“Since Wednesday June 7, and Monday June 12, 2023, thousands of people fled from Izombe that the careless security operatives killed Benjamin and four others.”

According to community report to Ohanaeze Youth Council, the houses burnt down in Amakpurudere Village alone belong to the following: Emmanuel Chukwudoruo, Romanus Obiagwu, Philip Okoronkwo, Ifeanyi Umezuruike, Canice Ogbonna, Herbert Nwoke, late Lucky Nwoke, Lambart Ekejiuba, Simeon Ekejiuba, Sabastine Okereke, Emeka Awaeze and Dominic Iwuanyanwu.

“Others whose houses were affected are: Benjamin Ohanyirim, Jerome Ohanyirim, Late Marcelinus Ogbonna, Lawrence Ogbonna, Calistus Ononiwu, Chief Alex Madubuko, Chief Oliver Ihejirika, Anthony Ihejirika, Alphonsius Ogbonna among others.

Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Henry Okoye, described the allegations as untrue.

He said that the police are capable of protecting lives and property of the citizens, admitting that though some insurgent groups have camps in Izombe, Agwa and other surrounding areas from where they carry out raid on innocent citizens, the police have been raiding such camps.

He added “But while we are doing so, we ensure that the lives of innocent citizens and freedom of movement is not put at risk.”