

Gunmen sack Edo community, kill one

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The deserted city yesterday.

One person have been shot dead and many others injured at the weekend when suspected thugs allegedly invaded Obagie N'evbuosa community in Ikpoba-Okha local government area of Edo State.

The Guardian gathered yesterday that the community has been deserted by residents who fear their attackers may return. The deceased was identified as 42-year-old Sunday Uduware and the suspected hoodlums were reportedly moving from house to house looking for victims.



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Sources disclosed that the community has been deserted as the hoodlums laid siege, unleashing violence on residents from one house to another since last Friday when Uduware was gunned down by the rampaging attackers. The attackers were alleged to have been accompanied by some policemen during the operation, an allegation the police has denied.

One of the wounded persons, Favour Sunday, now receiving medical attention at a private hospital said he was shot in the presence of a policeman.

Commenting on the attack, the Enogie of Obagie N'evbuosa, Stephen Usiemwanta Imadonmwanyi, alleged that those terrorising his community are from neighbouring Amagba village adding that he had made series of complaints about their activities in his domain to the Secretary to Edo State Government, Department of State Services

(DSS) and other relevant agencies. He said he would also report this latest attack to the Oba of Benin.

The Okaghele of the community, Festus Edegbe, said the crisis was over a boundary dispute between Obagie N'evbuosa and Amagba communities. Efforts to obtain the versions of Amagba and other villages alleged in the crisis failed.

When contacted, the Commissioner of Police, Johnson Kokumo, said some persons have been arrested in connection with the crisis and that full-scale investigation into the attack had begun.

He, however, denied any complicity of the police saying “under my watch no police officer will protect hoodlums to commit crime in Edo.”

In another development, three illegal oil bunkerers were feared killed yesterday in a massive pipeline fire at Okpare-Olomu, Delta state, which erupted in the early hours. Several boats and equipment used in oil theft were also destroyed. The inferno is so massive its intensity can be felt 600 metres away.

A senior officer of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) who spoke to The Guardian at the scene of the fire, said the fire, from all available evidence, was the handiwork of oil thieves.

He said: “Look at the devastation, even the river is burning. It is clear that illegal oil bunkerers caused it, this bridge we are standing on can be engulfed with fire any moment because the whole river is covered with crude oil or condensate, and it is burning. I am leaving here, thank you.”



Student protests rattle Bangladesh for a third day

24 mins ago

Asked if he was aware of the report making the rounds that three persons involved in illicit oil activity died in the fire, he said: “I heard that story too but as you can see I am here to inspect the site unofficially. So, I don’t have enough details to confirm that.

However, Okpare-Olumu residents, who gathered some distance from the site of the devastation, said three persons were burnt beyond recognition in the fire.

A young man who claimed to be a youth leader from nearby Ekapkamre community and who gave his name as Matthew Odjabe said he heard from close friends that three persons died in the inferno when the surrounding environment suddenly ignited and burnt everything in sight.

As at the time of filing this report the residents in houses near the river were seen evacuating their belongings.

Meanwhile, over 500 youths yesterday renounced their membership of their various secret cult groups in a renewed determination by the state government to rid the state of the menace of cultism which has claimed many lives.

The youths, who hailed from different local government areas in the state and gathered in Yenagoa, the state capital, said they were moved to take the action following various opportunities created by the governor, Mr. Seriake Dickson, for youth empowerment.

Lamenting the evil of cultism, the youths said they were deceived to join secret associations by some of their leaders, but thanked the governor for bringing them out of darkness. They also vowed to assist security agencies and the state government fight crimes in the state.

The youths took their stand against cultism at a brief ceremony organised by the Chairman of the Bayelsa State Volunteers (BSV), Prince Douye Koroye, at the BSV's office in Yenagoa.

They were received by Koroye, the Special Adviser to the Governor on Security Matters, Boma Sparo-Jack; Majority Leader, State House of Assembly, Dr. Peter Akpe; the Central Zone Chairman, Ijaw Youths Council (IYC), Tare Porri and other Dickson's aides such as Jeremaiah Owoupele and Bonny Aya.

Koroye declared that the youths, who took anti-cultism oaths administered by Sparo-Jack and signed denunciation forms, would be enlisted into the special squad of the state volunteer service.



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He said Dickson desired the youths to stay clear of crimes to enable them achieve their potential and contribute positively to the development of the state.

He noted that the amended anti-cultism law passed recently by the House of Assembly was a demonstration of Dickson's commitment to end cultism as it strengthened punishments for convicted cultists.

