

# Abuja community tense over herder's murder

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## *From Okodili Ndidi, Abuja*

The harmonious co-existence between the Fulani herdsmen and Gbegi community in Abuja Municipal Area Council is currently threatened by the gruesome murder of a twenty-year old herder, Mustapha Iliyasu.

Already tension is mounting in the community over fear of possible reprisal attack by the herdsmen.

The victim was allegedly waylaid by a group of Gbegi youths suspected to be members of a dreaded cult gang terrorizing the community was hacked to death in the presence of his pregnant wife, Mariam Iliyasu, who he was trying to protect from the assailants.

According to the victim's uncle, Iliyasu Haruna, he was attacked in the company of other fulani youths who were also wounded.

He said two of them narrowly escaped death with severe machete wounds and cannot still stand up five days after the attack.

Narrating the incident to *The Nation*, Haruna said he sent the victim to deliver a cow to a customer where he was eventually attacked and killed.

In his words, "the Councillor representing our ward was organizing a remembrance ceremony for his late father and Chief of Gbegi and he bought a cow from me but because I was not disposed, I sent my elder brother's son to take the cow to the man, I also gave him some cash donation to give to the celebrant since I won't be coming.

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"I was in the house around 11 am when one of the boys called me that they have killed my brother's son and I saw some of the boys who were attacked with him running to the house.

"When I asked them what happened, they told me that they were going home after they have delivered the cow when some boys armed with machetes stopped them and started dragging the only woman among them who happened to be the wife of the victim. At that point he came out to stop them from taking the wife away and they attacked him with cutlasses and killed him and fled".

Continuing amid tears he said, "I got there about 1am and saw his lifeless boy soaked in blood then I went to Jukwoyi Police station and reported the matter and the Police came and took the corpse to a mortuary.

"Two of the suspects have been arrested, one of them is the son of the Councillor who organised the event, while others are still walking the streets as if there is no consequence to killing an innocent man.

"All we are demanding is justice because some influential people are trying to suppress the matter but if that is done it will result to a fight and we don't want that, we have been living with Gbegi people for a long time, infact most of us were born in Gbegi the only thing that can avert possible reprisal is justice.

"We want the Police to give us the corpse for burial but we are demanding that every person that was involved should be brought to book".

However when contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer in charge of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Command Njuguri Manzah, a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), said he will get back to our reporter.

But a Police Officer at Jikwoyi Police station where the matter was reported, said they got a distress call about 1am Sunday morning about the killing of a Fulani youth.

He said that two of the suspects have been arrested, while manhunt is on for others who participated in the gruesome act.

The Officer who didn't want his name in print, affirmed that there is mounting tension in the community, "we are appealing to the Fulani community to remain calm and allow the law take its course because justice must be done in this case".