

Abia community deserted following killing of two soldiers

THE leadership of the 14 Brigade Army Headquarters, Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's Barracks Ohafia, Abia State has begun the search for the killers of its personnel in Owaza/Obibor communities in Ukwa West Local government Area of the state.

Our correspondent also gathered that the soldiers are equally conducting a search operation to recover guns of the deceased soldiers which were taken away by their killers.

Recall that *The Nation* had reported that two soldiers were killed and their patrol car burnt at their duty post between the boundaries of Owaza and Obibor communities respectively by the yet-to-be identified gunmen.

Indigenes of the two communities were said to have started leaving their homes in

From Sunny Nwankwo,
Umuahia

droves as they fear possible reprisal attack from the military.

There were however reports on Wednesday that soldiers from the 144 Battalion; army camp in-charge of the entire Aba Area Of Responsibility (AOR) burning cement and phone shops in the affected communities, which a military source debunked.

The governor of the state, Dr. Okezie Ikpeazu, on Wednesday while calling for calm in the affected communities, expressed grave concerns about the reported ongoing attacks in Owaza by soldiers of the Nigerian Army 14 Brigade.

This is even as he tasked the soldiers to show high level of patriotism in order to avoid the

situation degenerating any further, disclosing that he had convoked a crucial meeting with stakeholders of the affected communities holding yesterday at the Governor's Lodge in Aba at 3pm in order to resolve the lingering crisis in the affected communities.

A source within the 14 Brigade told *The Nation* that General Officers Commanding (GOC) both 6 (Port Harcourt) and 82 (Enugu) Divisions respectively have visited the affected area to have firsthand information on the incident.

Information gathered by our reporter has it that at the time of filing the report, the military have been combing the area with the aim of recovering the missing guns that they feared could be used by the hoodlums to commit heinous crime.

"We are only looking for the

missing arms and also exploring other ways to unveil those behind the killing of the soldiers.

"Army is not after innocent citizens. We understand that when things like this happen, a lot of people will be under apprehension. We are aware that those who committed the crime may not be in the community.

"We have started combing bushes around the area and at the same time, not ruling out the possibility of the weapon still being hidden in the community. All we are asking the community is to help us by giving relevant information."

Some of the villagers are said to be taking refuge in neighbouring communities, while others have equally moved down to Aba to be with their loved ones.

A group of Kogi police barrack ablaze over killing of young boy