

# Gunmen kill farmer in Edo community

'Suyi Ayodele | Benin

**TRAGEDY struck at the agrarian community of Ubune-Ivb-iaro in Owan East Local Government Area of Edo State on Friday as gunmen suspected to be herdsmen killed a middle-age man, Mr Danjuma Emokpaire on his farm.**

Residents of the community, who spoke to journalists on phone, said the deceased was attacked by the armed men while he was about to leave the farm after the day's work.

The residents, who said they saw the victim going to the farm on Friday, added that he said he was going to plant yam seedlings.

One of the residents disclosed that they became worried when in the early morning on Saturday, the deceased was not seen at home.

According to the resident, "Yesterday evening (Friday), there was heavy rainfall until late night, so it wasn't possible for people to know whether he returned from the farm or not.

"But this morning (Saturday), he was not seen around. This prompted some people to go to his house and found it locked from the front. So, we had to mobilise and go to the farm to search for him. Unfortunately, what was seen was unexpected.

"We found him dead. What we see around the scene of the incident indicated that he was attacked and killed while on the motorcycle. There was no sign that there was confrontation between him and those that killed him. The motorbike was damaged, cutlass and mobile phone

were taken away by the attackers," he said.

Also speaking, a member of a vigilante group in the community, Abdul Saliu Emokpaire, said the corpse of the man had been brought home for burial.

Emokpaire, who called on the security agencies and the Edo State government to come to the aid of the community, noted that the community had been gripped with fears, as the people were afraid to go to farm for fear of being attacked by herdsmen.

"We call on security agencies in the state and Governor Godwin Obaseki that we are mourning one of our illustrious sons whose life was cut short by evil men. This is farming season, and this is the time the people of the community who are predominantly farmers are preparing land for cultivation. Fears have gripped the community. We are now afraid to go to our various farms," he added.

Meanwhile, a senior police officer in the Afuze Divisional Police Headquarters confirmed the incident.

The officer, who pleaded anonymity, said policemen had been drafted to the community and had visited the scene of the crime.

He also added that the policemen obtained the necessary information that was required for investigation.

When contacted, the state police command's Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Chidi Nwabuzor, said he was yet to be briefed, but said he would bring the information to the attention of the State Commissioner of Police.