

Gunmen abduct, kill pastor in Edo

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Edo State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Johnson Kokumo

Alexander Okere

Gunmen suspected to be Fulani herdsmen have reportedly killed a pastor of the Church of God Mission, one Pius Eromosele, in the Ovia North-East Local Government Area of Edo State.

Eromosele was said to have been abducted by the armed men while working on his farm at Odighi on March 29.

It was learnt that the pastor was later killed by the assailants, who also inflicted a deep cut on his head after accusing him of killing their cows.

The bodies of the deceased and a yet-to-be identified victim were said to have been later uncovered in the bush by a search team comprising hunters and vigilantes.

The Commissioner of Police, Mr Johnson Kokumo, and the Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Chidi Nwabuzor, could not be reached for comments as calls put across to their mobiles were unanswered.

They had also yet to respond to text messages sent to their mobiles as of press time.

But the eldest son of the deceased, Dr. Richard Eromosele, said the killers had earlier demanded a ransom of N4m before his (deceased) decomposing body was found on April 3.

He said, “On March 29, my mother called that she had been calling my father and that he didn’t pick the calls. She later called that my father later picked and told her that he had been kidnapped by herdsmen on his farm.

“The herdsmen did not use their phones. They were using my father’s phone and a phone of one of his workers. They demanded N4m but we begged them that it was a holiday and we could not raise the money.”

Richard also stated that he reported the incident to the police, whom he claimed referred him to the anti-kidnapping unit but allegedly did not do anything to save his late father.

He also said two of his father’s employees; Kingsley and Akpan, narrated how he was killed, after they managed to escape.

He added, “I went to the police and they told me that I should call them whenever the herdsmen called for ransom payment. I did that but there was no response from the police.

“The two workers that escaped told us that the herdsmen told my father that he was one of those killing their cows. It was on Tuesday (April 3), after the police failed to find my father that I begged hunters and vigilantes to help me.

“It was during the search that we found my father. His skull was cut out with a cutlass while his hands were also cut. We want security agencies to protect farmers in Odighi.”