

news

# Tears as suspected Fulani kill 22 in Ebonyi, Enugu, Umahi fumes

Edward Nnachi and Raphael Ede

**SUSPECTED Fulani herdsmen on Monday invaded Obeagu community in the Ishielu Local Government Area of Ebonyi State and killed 16 persons who were between the ages of 18 and 56.**

Our correspondent, who visited the scene of the incident, observed that about 10 motorcycles and a vehicle, whose owners were killed, were set ablaze.

One of the eyewitnesses, who escaped the onslaught, Ngozi Odoabuchi, described the incident as horrible.

"I went to Ishielu Local Government headquarters where I am working and after the close of work, I took motorcycle popularly known as okada from Nkalagu to my community, Obeagu. It was around 4.30pm.

The okada man is from my community; so, he took me and one other person, a lady.

"We passed Egedegede Junction and between the village and the junction, we sighted about seven men in black clothes; three were going inside the bush while four were by the roadsides.

"On getting to the point, they stopped us and took us inside the bush. Inside the bush were about 10 to 15 others. Immediately, they started beating us black and blue. While they were beating two of us who were women, they stabbed the driver with a dagger and slaughtered him in our presence.

"After killing him, they started

marching on our body. So, every motorcycle that comes, they will stop it, kill every male and burn the motorcycle."

Mrs Odoabuchi, who said she prayed for God's intervention, noted that while she was lying down with another girl, they (attackers) left, pursuing other people.

She said they (victims) immediately ran into the bush and until Tuesday morning.

Corroborating her story, Amuche Uga, another victim who survived the onslaught, said she was coming home from Onitsha to see her parents when she got stuck in the incident, even as she thanked God she

survived it.

She said, "All those who carried out the attack were Fulani. They told us that they were Fulani militias. They also told us that we should go and tell Nnamdi Kanu that they can enter any community in Igboland and carry an attack and nothing will happen."

Another person who gave his name as Okechukwu Ebeh, alleged that the assailants were brought to the community on Monday in five unmarked Hilux vans.

"They (assailants) first attacked a young man who was returning home with his mother and wife. When he came to the village,

after telling his story, our people immediately started calling people who were in Nkalagu and Eha-Amufu and other neighbouring communities to remain there until the issue was addressed.

"Unfortunately, those who didn't get the information were mostly the victims. Others killed were people passing through the community from other states at Egedegede Junction."

Our correspondent counted 16 corpses that were scattered in various locations where they were killed.

Speaking on the carnage, the Chairman of Ishielu Local Government Area, Henry

Eze, described the incident as gruesome and called on the security agencies to fish out the killers.

A community leader, who gave his name as Oji Osondu said the offence of his community was that they dared to ask the herdsmen to leave their community.

The Ebonyi State Police Command confirmed the incident but could not verify the casualty figure.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Loveth Odah, said, "The Commissioner of Police delegated a team of policemen for an on-the-spot assessment because of peace talks going on in the town."

**We know Fulani who**

**killed cleric, 15 others, fish them out - Umahi**

Meanwhile, the State Governor, David Umahi, on Tuesday confirmed that over 15 persons were killed by suspected Fulani herdsmen on Monday.

The governor, who said the herdsmen allegedly perpetrated the mayhem with AK-47 rifles, urged security agencies to fish out the killers.

Umahi, who spoke at Obeagu in the Ishielu Local Government Area of the state, said, "I got very shocking news this afternoon about the attack on about four communities of Nkalaha, Obeagu, Amaezu and Umuhali in Ishielu Local Government Area of the state by herdsmen wielding AK-47 rifles. They came yesterday (Monday) and killed 15 members of these communities.

"Good enough, we have some traces of the sponsors; we have the traces of those who came here. I will not disclose it, but I am going to escalate the identities of the people to the highest authorities and we wait to see what they will do. But we condemn this attack; if it is allowed to go this way, it is capable of generating very serious civil war among the nation of Nigeria."

"I want to demand from the security chiefs to fish out this people because they are well known; they should fish them out. Let them face the wrath of the law."

**Suspected herders kill six in Enugu community**

Also, the Enugu State Command of the Nigeria Police Force on Tuesday confirmed the killing of six persons in Adani community, Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of the state by yet to be identified hoodlums.

It also confirmed that another two persons were injured in the incident, while shops and other properties were destroyed.

It was gathered that a young man from Igga, who was working at Adarice Factory in Adani, was shot by the herdsmen over a misunderstanding, even as the herdsmen were said to have blocked sympathisers from taking the man to hospital.

The incident, according to sources, led to a clash between Fulani herdsmen and members of Igga community in Adani.

However, a statement issued in the wee hours of Tuesday by the Command's spokesman, Daniel Ndukwe, indicated that the state Commissioner of Police, Mohammed Aliyu led other security agencies on a visit to the area on Monday.



• L-R: Vice President Yemi Osinbajo; Emir of Gombe, Abubakar Shehu; and Governor Inuwa Yahaya of Gombe State, during the Vice President's visit to the Emir's Palace in Gombe State... on Tuesday. Photo: NAN

## Protests as Ogun dumps 1,500 casual teachers' recruitment

Daud Olatunji, Abeokuta

**N**O fewer than 1,500 shortlisted candidates for employment into the Ogun State Universal Basic Education Board on Tuesday protested against alleged government's decision

### Residents cry out as oil spill ravages Rivers community

Dennis Naku, Port Harcourt

**T**HE people of Omovire in Rumuekpe, Emuoha Local Government Area of Rivers State have cried out over a huge oil spill that destroyed farmlands and polluted their rivers.

They said the crude could be seen floating on the river, adding that the stench coming therefrom was becoming unbearable.

The villagers also said the spill which was first noticed some years ago had suddenly resurface and lamented that the source of the spill had yet to be identified by

to dump their recruitment for a casual teaching initiative.

The government had commenced the recruitment of the 1,500 teachers in the last quarter of 2019.

The COVID-19 pandemic, however, halted the exercise.

vegetable, it is the same thing. We cannot drink the water again."

Speaking, the Community Development Committee Chairman of Omovire, Excellent Eze, said all relevant government agencies were aware of their plight, but none had come to the rescue of the people.

Meanwhile, Senior Programmes Officer of Social Action, Prince Edegebo, who led a team on inspection of impacted sites, called for an immediate clean-up of the polluted water in the community.

"Let the world know how

But the applicants on Tuesday marched to the Governor's Office with placards, calling on Governor Dapo Abiodun to release their appointment letters.

The protest came up less than 24 hours after the state government announced the new initiative which involved fresh recruitment of teachers that would serve as interns for two years.

The protesters claimed that the state Commissioner for Education, Science and Technology, Prof. Abayomi Arigbabu, had once informed them that the release of their appointment letters might not be possible anytime soon because of paucity of funds.

The protesters, who spoke with newsmen at the state secretariat of the Nigeria Union of Journalists, expressed fears that the government had subtly cancelled their recruitment for the new approach.

Speaking on behalf of the protesters, an applicant from

recruitment, which has taken almost two years now.

"We have been left unattended to; no communication. We are the ones forcing ourselves to hear from them; they refuse to talk to us.

"They sent us congratulatory messages that we have been selected. We are appealing to the governor to give us our appointment letters."

Another candidate, Gbeletan Ismail, said he and his colleagues were shocked that the government has started the recruitment of interns without any update on the 1,500 applicants.

Gbeletan said, "They said they want to recruit teachers on contract basis. We met with the Commissioner for Education and he said appointment letters are not feasible because the government is not that financially buoyant to pay the permanent workers. He said that was why they are thinking of another arrangement

of empowering another set of people, who after two years, may be considered for permanent employment.

"This is what the government promised. All we want is our employment letter."

When Arigbabu was contacted on the telephone, he terminated the call after listening to our correspondent's enquiry.

He refused to answer subsequent calls made to his mobile line.

But the State Chairman of SUBEB, Dr Femi Majekodunmi, denied cancellation of the process, adding that the delay was caused by paucity of fund.

He said, "This is a kind of interim thing. It is a contract for two years. We have not cancelled their recruitment.

"But, if they want to partake in this new recruitment, they are free to take part. Government did not forget them."

**EC declares Friday, Monday Eastern Public Holidays**