



Shock, as Fulani herdsmen invade Enugu community

Kill 2 family members, raze houses

By SAM OTI

SUSPECTED Fulani herdsmen unleashed mayhem in Ajona-Ogbo town in Abbi community, Uzo-Uwani LGA, Enugu State, when they launched a midnight attack on the people of the community, killing two persons of the same parents. They went on the rampage, destroyed valuable property and set several houses ablaze.

The assailants slaughtered Mr Fidelis Okeja and his sister, Mercy Orieki Okeja, with machetes and left several others wounded. Their bodies, lacerated with machete wounds were recovered at the scene by the police and deposited at the Bishop Shanahan Hospital, Nsukka.

Investigation revealed that the herdsmen infiltrated the village through the Kogi axis, wielding dangerous weapons like guns, daggers and charms. They confronted the unarmed villagers and went on a killing spree, cutting down the elderly and the

children with their cutlasses. The late Fidelis, who was a teacher in Nsukka town, had gone to his rural home for a family meeting when he ran into the killing squad. Mercy, who was with him during the attack, also lost her life. Findings revealed that the late Fidelis had three wives and he was the breadwinner of his large family before the tragic incident.

Sunday Sun gathered that houses belonging to one of the villagers identified as Remigius, popularly known as Ichie Million and that of the PDP chairman of Uzo-Uwani LGA, Chief Albert Eze, were among those razed during the attack.

Further inquiries revealed that the villagers, mostly old men, women and children, ran away from the troubled area to Abbi and Ugbene neighbouring villages for fear of renewed attack.

One of the survivors, who gave his name as Onyoma Ezugwu, said the villagers, had been having a running battle with the

herdsmen over the continued destruction of their farmlands. According to him, farmlands were regularly trampled on by cattle belonging to the Fulani herdsmen, despite series of protests by the local farmers.

A reliable source in the troubled area told this reporter that a police patrol team from Nsukka command visited the area shortly after the bloody incident but no arrest was made in connection with the attack.

Meanwhile, the village has become a ghost town, as traumatized family members refused to return to their homes for fear of another attack.

This latest attack came barely six months after Mr Samuel Okoro, an elderly man from Uguobu Abbi, was gunned down by suspected Fulani herdsmen in the presence of his children.

Few weeks after his death, Mr Robert Ezugwu, from neighbouring Amaikwu Village in Ugbene Ajima community was hacked down in his farmland by the

herdsmen, who left him in a pool of blood. He escaped death by the whiskers, with wounds all over his body.

Okoro, aged 60, a father of three children, met his untimely death in the hands of the herdsmen when he accosted them for molesting his under-aged children in the farm. Also, Ezugwu, a father of seven children, said he had gone to the farm on a market day for farm work, unknown to him that the herdsmen were parading the area with the lust to kill.

The lawless act of the herdsmen, according to *Sunday Sun* findings, was fueled by the lack of police post in Abbi, Nrobo and Ugbene Ajima communities. The nearest police post for the people living in the area is at Nkpologu, Adani or Nsukka town, which often takes as long as five hours before the villagers could reach them for help. No security help-lines or emergency line function in the area, save for local vigilance groups with limited training and experience of policing.

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