

# Again, herders kill 6 in Plateau villages

• Police, vigilance group on war path over arrest of operatives in Edo

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19th August 2021 in **National**

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From **Tony Osauzo**, Benin and **Gyang Bere**, Jos

**No fewer than six persons were reportedly killed when Fulani herdsmen unleashed terror on Chando-Zrrechi (Tafi-Gana) in Miango District of Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau State.**

The killings which took place on Tuesday night, left behind songs of sorrow in the community and six persons were gruesomely murdered.

Secretary General of Irigwe Development Association, Danjuma Auta, confirmed the incident and said it is unfortunate that the killing is coming when Plateau people are earnestly working for peace.

He said: "As the Irigwe nation has continue to receive attack from left right and centre over the unfortunate incidence of the Rukuba road attack on innocent commuters which the Irigwe nation knows nothing about.

"Last night, August 17, 2021, one of our village, Chando-Zrrechi (Tafi-Gana) was attacked by Fulani herdsmen. Five people confirmed dead so far at Tafi Gana village of Miango District Irigwe chiefdom and one persons was killed at Dong village."

He solicited the support of Nigerians in putting a stop to the killings as several lives have been wasted in the last few weeks.

"Nigeria has remain silent as if nothing is happening, we are calling on the authorities to put a stop to the evil act and if nothing is done to avert this ugly trend, Irigwe people will be wiped out," he said.

This is as Governor Simon Lalong of Plateau decried the use of hard drugs by youths as a trigger to perpetrate crimes in some communities.

Lalong stated this during a meeting organised for key stakeholders of Irigwe Chiefdom in Bassa Local Government Area, yesterday, at Government House, Jos.

The meeting followed series of attacks in the area and the August 14 killing of commuters along Rukuba road of Jos North Local Government Area.

He said the various attacks in some communities in the state were acts of criminalities which were given religious coloration, noting that youths were the bane of concern in such acts because of their susceptibility through drug abuse.

He said the act was aggravating security challenges in the state, urging elders not to relent in advising them against such lifestyle.

The governor said youths had a critical role to play in ending insecurity in the state.

Meanwhile, the Edo State Police Command and Edo Vigilante Network are on collision course over alleged maltreatment of two policemen who were accused of dealing in India hemp.

The two policemen were seen in a viral video apprehended by operatives of the vigilante for possession of Indian hemp, handcuffed together and were interrogated.

One of the vigilante was heard saying the policemen would be handed over to the men of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) as the policemen demanded they be treated gently while they were being led away.

The vigilante, led by John Osasere Ohonba, also expressed surprise that some of the items that were identified as exhibits were in possession of the policemen and not at the station.

But in a statement yesterday, the spokesman of the state police command, Bello Kontongs, said the narrative being peddled by Awilo and his men is false.

“The attention of Edo State Police Command has been drawn to a viral video where two policemen (drivers) in mufti attached to State Highway Patrol, Edo State Police Command, were handcuffed, physically brutalised and tortured by members of vigilance group, led by one Ohonba alias Awilo.

“Contrary to the false and malicious narrative by Awilo and his group that the policemen were suspected drug dealers and connivers with an alleged suspect, Ikpefua Idowu, in custody of the group, facts of the incident is that the policemen went to vigilante office with one Lucky and his girlfriend to seek the whereabouts of Idowu who was arrested by Awilo and his group.

“Not minding the fact that the policemen introduced themselves and were identified by Awilo and his group, Awilo did not only order that the policemen be physically assaulted, it was evidenced in the viral video that Awilo who wore a red jacket initiated and participated actively in the attack.

“It is pertinent at this juncture to convey that it is a known fact to Awilo and his group that the vehicle, Lexus RX330 SUV captured in the viral video belong to Lucky, a brother to the detained Idowu in the custody of Awilo and his vigilance group on whose behalf the policemen went to sort for.

“It is incontrovertible therefore that the items allegedly found in the vehicle wouldn't have in any way belong to the policemen as falsely projected in the viral video. It belongs to Lucky.

“It is necessary to further state that the mission of the policemen was merely fact finding which Awilo and his group considered a distraction and unfortunately unleashed unnecessary attack on them. This has presently necessitated admission of the men in hospital having been diagnosed of internal haemorrhage.

“Edo State commissioner of Police has ordered investigation into the incidence,” Kotongs said.