

Enugu community conducts mass burial for 8 victims of communal clashes

THE people of Umuanihiyovo Oyiwode, Akpawfu in Nkanu East Local Government Area of Enugu State, yesterday, conducted a mass burial for eight members of the community.

Those buried were killed in a communal clash within the community which began in April 2023.

There was heavy presence of security operatives as soon as the burial ceremonies went underway.

A community member, said that trouble started when one of the community leaders constituted and armed a vigilance group that went out to attack another section of the community.

He said more than 15 houses had been burnt in the community since the crisis started.

Addressing newsmen after the burial, Chief James Ogbu, the Igwe-elect of Isiagu Autonomous Community, Akpawfu, confirmed the narrative and said the initial rumour that herdsmen were responsible for the murders were untrue.

"It was not herdsmen that

killed us, but Akpawfu people killed their kinsmen.

"We decided to conduct the mass burial of those whose bodies could be retrieved as other persons are still missing.

"The state government is aware of the issue since the crisis began and that explains the presence of security operatives at the mass burial, otherwise another attack would have occurred," he said.

A bereaved member of the

community resident outside Nigeria said his house in the community was razed, while his mother and brother were kidnapped but were later released.

"In April 2023 when the crisis began, community members fled from their homes and this place became a ghost town. Today, the place is being populated again as there is seeming peace," he said.

Very Rev. Philip Arum of

the Methodist Church, Nnewi Diocese, who conducted the funeral service, said the eight persons that were buried, sacrificed their lives for the betterment of the community, describing them as heroes of Akpawfu.

"This is my first time of conducting a mass funeral service for people of my community. This is a terrible condition that has never happened before in our community," he said.

NAF bombards terrorists' stronghold in Niger, kills notorious commanders, others

From **Molly Kilete**, Abuja

THE Nigerian Air Force (NAF), said its Air Component of Operation Whirl Punch, has bombarded a terrorists stronghold in Alawa Forest, Niger State, killing several terrorists and their commanders including a notorious terrorist kingpin, Mallam Umar.

NAF Director of Public Relations and Information Air Vice Marshal Edward Gabkwet, said Air strikes carried

out on Saturday, 27, April, 2024, by the Air Component of Operation Whirl Punch targeted at terrorists' hideouts in Shiroro Local Government Area (LGA) of Niger State and against economic saboteurs in the Niger Delta region have yielded significant results.

Gabkwet, in a statement, said In Shiroro LGA, the strikes were executed at the stronghold of notorious terrorist kingpin, Mallam Umar, and several other commanders located in the Alawa Forest area.

positive consequences on their ability to attack surface forces as well as innocent civilians within the area.

He said Similar air strikes were also carried out the same day in the Niger Delta region against economic saboteurs and oil thieves bent of illegally siphoning crude oil from mutilated pipelines, while destroying the environment and ecosystems. This time, surveillance over Ke, Egbema, Akaso Krakama, Krikama and Military Council Valley re-