



Herdsmen attack: Women embark on hunger strike

Demand corpse of 71-year-old farmer

Women of Ezi Ajah, Amuro community in Afikpo North Local Government Area of Ebonyi State have embarked on a hunger strike to protest the alleged abduction and killing of one of their own, Mrs. Uche Oko, popularly known as Ogbo Uche by suspected herdsmen.

The people of the area and herdsmen since July 15, 2017, have been having conflict over destruction of their farms and missing cows. While the herdsmen claimed that 40 of their cows were missing and put the estimate at N12million, which the villagers must pay to them, the people place the cost of vandalised farms by herdsmen at N29million.

They also want the money
However, the State Police
Command, through its Commander of State Anti- Robbery Squad (SARS), CSP Abdulkadir Yahaya made a futile effort to restore peace and tranquility to the area.

Also, the little progress made by the state government appears short-lived as one of the natives, Mrs. Uche Oko go missing, when all thought the matter had been concluded in convivial note.

The woman had on August 29, 2017, gone to her farm to harvest cassava stems meant to cultivate in another farm but that was the last the community saw her. A search conducted in the farm proved abortive even as a 30-year-old man in the same area, Chukwu Uche, on Friday morning, escaped death, when herdsmen that invaded his farm attacked him. Speaking to Sunday Telegraph, a woman leader in the area, Ugo Eze, said, "Tragedy befell us in this village.

Things we never witnessed before started happening. Since August, when Mrs. Oko went to farm to harvest cassava stem, she has not returned. "Our men have searched for her everywhere and she was not been found either life or dead.

Women have also done same and we have not seen her corpse. As we are mourning her, we decided not to eat or go to the farm or other places until we find her either dead or alive.

“One of our children went to the farm to harvest cocoyam and was attacked by herdsmen. He was harvesting his crops when herdsmen with their cattle invaded his farm. He asked them to take their cattle out of his farm but the herdsmen threatened to finish him if he utters other word.” Meanwhile, the daughter of the missing Oko, Mrs. Orioma Echem said ever since her mother got missing, she had lost her peace.

“We have seen where my mother harvested cassava stems in the farm but we have not seen her and the cassava stems she harvested. I am sad because I have not seen my mother. I want my mother brought to me dead or alive. Let God do this for me,” she said.

On his part, Mr. Ogbonnia Oko, the stepbrother of the missing woman said he has reported the matter to the Afikpo North Divisional Police.

“My step-sister went to farm to harvest cassava stem and has not returned since the three days she left for the farm. I have raised the alarm and the people of my village; both youths and adult have searched for her both in the morning, night and evening.”