

# Protest Rocks Ekiti Community Over Killing of Farmer by Suspected Herdsmen

**Victor Ogunje** in Ado Ekiti

The people of Ayegbaju Ekiti, Oye Local Government Area of Ekiti State, on Thursday evening protested over alleged killing of a farmer, Elijah Ogor by suspected Fulani herdsman.

Ogor, who is in his 30s and hailed from Benue State, was killed inside his farm located between Ayegbaju and Ido Ekiti on Wednesday after his farm was allegedly destroyed by cattle.

The protesters blocked Ifaki-Ayegbaju and Ayegbaju-Oye road and prevented movements of vehicles for over an hour in and out of the town.

One of the protesters, who identified himself as Adeleye, said the victim was shot by suspected herder at the back and died in the pool of his blood right on his farm.

"All we want is justice. How could any Fulani cattle rearer go to someone's farm and destroy it and still went ahead to kill him? This is unjust and callous.

"This issue must be investigated thoroughly and whoever was involved should be prosecuted accordingly," he lamented.

Immediately the death was reported through the Seriki Fulani in Ekiti, Alhaji Abashe Adamu, the task force of Gan-Allah Fulani Development Association of Nigeria (GAFDAN), Ekiti chapter, swung into action and combed Ayegbaju-Ido-Iludun expansive farmland and arrested one Umar Abubakar Sanda, in connection with the death.

Addressing journalists in Ado Ekiti on Sanda's arrest, GAFDAN'S Secretary in Ekiti, Hon. Toyin Ibrahim, said: "We got the information from Seriki Fulani that a farmer was killed in Ayegbaju.

Our task force, comprising virtually all the ethnic groups in Nigeria moved into that bush and arrested Umar Sanda.

"At the point we saw him, he was holding a rifle and with live cartridge inside. We queried the rationale behind the carrying of firearm which contravened Ekiti State Anti-Grazing Law, but he gave no reason. He was just raising issues that would make him look innocent.

"The reason why we suspected him was that, two other people were with the deceased when he was shot, they escaped from the scene and the description they gave showed that the suspect was involved.

"As law abiding group, we immediately took Sanda to the police station at Ido Ekiti where he was detained. Part of our mandate in GAFDAN is to arrest cattle rustlers and errant herdsmen, who destroy farmlands or commit other offences."

Ibrahim appealed to the government to empower the group to be able to carry out the mandate of ensuring harmonious relationship between farmers and Fulani herders.

He said the group would also support the security agencies to reduce senseless killings by errant Fulani herdsmen.

When called for confirmation, the Police Public Relations Officer, Ekiti Command, DSP Caleb Ikechukwu, said a suspect had been arrested in connection with the crime.

"We learnt a farmer was killed inside the farm and he had been apprehended and brought to the police. He is presently being detained in our custody and once we conclude investigation, we shall charge him