

Suspected Herdsmen Kidnap, Kill Rivers PDP Guber Aspirant

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Armed herdsmen have kidnapped and murdered a 2019 governorship aspirant of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Rivers State, Mr. Soala West.

It was learnt that West, who hails from Abonema, Akuku Toru Local Government Area of the state, was abducted at his poultry farm at Aluu, behind OPM in Port Harcourt on March 12 but was reportedly found dead on Wednesday evening.

Further findings and pictorial evidence showed that West was brutally killed by the armed herdsmen days before his corpse was discovered at a bush along Eleka pipeline, Port Harcourt.

The decomposing remains of West were said to have a bullet wound and matchete cuts.

The family of the deceased, who until his death was a popularly lawyer and promoter of small businesses in Port Harcourt, was thrown into confusion and mourning.

Emmanuel, the elder brother of the deceased, said his brother was rounded up by the herdsmen, at Aluu where he went to inspect his poultry project.

Emmanuel said the victim was at the site to pay his workers when the herdsmen, who were armed with Ak-47 rifles, seized him and led him into the bush.

He said the bandits first demanded N30million but brought it down to N2.5million before it was discovered that they had already killed the victim.

"This is shocking to us. We don't know why they should kill our brother this way. Our entire family has been thrown into mourning. We just hope that the police will arrest all those involved in the killing of our brother," he said

It was, however, gathered that the anti-kidnapping squad of the police, had arrested a kingpin in the kidnap saga.

A senior police officer, who spoke in confidence, said the anti-kidnapping team through intelligence gathering picked the suspect, who later confessed to the killing.

The anti-kidnapping team was working on assassination theory following the insistence of the bandits on killing the victim despite negotiating for ransom.

The Ijaw Youths Council (IYC), Worldwide, has condemned the attack and raised the alarm over infiltration of the zone by criminal Fulani herdsmen.

The Secretary-General of IYC, Mr. Alfred Kemepado, said investigations by the council revealed that there were ongoing systematic abductions and other criminal activities in the Niger Delta by armed Fulani herdsmen.

He wondered why West was horribly killed by the bandits despite demanding and receiving ransom.

"The body of West was discovered a day the persons killed by criminal herdsmen in Delta State were being buried. This confirms our fears that our has has been invaded by criminal Fulani herdsmen.

"We are living at a dangerous time which requires absolute vigilance. It is time to identify these criminals and chase them out of our towns, clans, communities and villages.

"The murder of West, a prominent lawyer, a sound politician and philanthropist is very painful and can't be forgotten in a hurry. We so far commend the anti-kidnapping squad of the Rivers State police command for their professionalism that led to the arrest of the kidnap kingpin.