

Residents Flee as Suspected Herdsmen Kill Farmer, Son in Ondo

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- State records first COVID-19 case

By James Sowole

Disturbed by incessant attacks by suspected Fulani herdsmen, residents of Arimogija Community in Ose Local Government Area of Ondo State have begun to flee the community.

This is as the state yesterday recorded first case of Coronavirus as a suspected person tested positive. The situation was revealed in a statement signed by the Commissioner for Information and Orientation, Mr. Donald Ojogo who said it was with great concern that the Ondo State Government announced the first index case. A suspected case tested positive to the COVID-19 virus.

According to the residents, three farmers were killed on their farms during the week by suspected herdsmen while security men did nothing to check the activities of the criminals despite several cries of the community.

They also alleged that a helicopter came into the forest of the community and dropped some ammunition for the herdsmen.

A resident of the town, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that the entire community had been living in fear while those who cannot take the risk had begun to relocate from the community following the Fulani herdsmen's attack.

"The Fulani herdsmen have killed three people in this community, in just one week.

They killed a rice farmer, Jacob Odushe and his son, Adura this week. They killed another boy, Victor Ejeh. The boy's corpse was found in the bush after a week that he was declared missing. The cuts on his body showed that he was killed by the bandits.

"Again, few days ago, a helicopter was sighted in our community and we later found out that the helicopter brought some arms and ammunition into the bush for the herdsmen to continue in their attack against us," he said.

The source said the matter was reported at the police station but no action was taken by the security agencies on the matter.

"We want to appeal to the state government to come to our aid, we need serious presence of security agencies in this community and we don't want to be taking laws into our hands."

In his reaction, the Special Adviser to Governor Akeredolu on Security Matters, Alhaji Jimoh Dojumo, confirmed the killings in the community but said the governor had sent some security agents there to maintain law and order. He said, "I have been there, with some people, the people were so bitter about the man and his son that were killed. As they saw us they started protesting but I was able to calm them down.

"They were apprehensive. They said they saw a particular helicopter that came to the bush and they were suspecting that the helicopter brought some Fulani to the place to come and attack them probably at night.

"But Mr. Governor has sent some soldiers there, as I am talking to you soldiers were patrolling the community," he added.

Efforts to get the reaction of the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Mr. Tee Leo Ikoro, on the matter proved abortive.