

# Massacre in Ebonyi: Priest, 17 others killed by herdsmen

By Anayo Okoli,  
Peter Okutu &  
Ikechukwu Odu

•Those killed were about 18 including a Priest —Community member •We can only confirm 6 dead —Police •As Enugu CP orders full scale investigation into Adani killings •killings by herdsmen provocative —Ohanaeze •Umahi visits affected communities expresses sadness

**ENIGU**—BARELY two hours after eight people were killed in Adani, Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State by gunmen, a Methodist priest and 17 other indigenes of Igboederia, Obegu and Amuzi communities in Ishielu Local Government Area of Ebonyi State, were on Monday evening gruesomely killed by rampaging herdsmen who invaded the communities.

The car belonging to the Methodist priest was also burnt by the herdsmen. But the police in Ebonyi said only six people were killed.

The Ebonyi attack came as the Commissioner of Police, Enugu State Police Command, Mohammed Ndatsu Aliyu, yesterday, ordered full scale investigation to unravel the circumstances which led to the violence that claimed lives at Adani, Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu on Sunday night.

The Ebonyi incident came as a shock to the indigenes. While a resident who did not want his name in print said 18 persons were killed by the herdsmen in Ishielu, another resident said 10 persons were killed.

"We are mourning, we are in serious mourning since late hours of Monday. Herdsmen invaded our communities and massacred our people. As we speak, 18 persons were slaughtered like animals. They matchketed many of our people, burnt vehicles, motorcycles and looted our properties," the resident said.

Chairman of Ishielu Local Government Area, Sunday Eze, and Commissioner for Business Development in the state, Dr Stephen Odo, who hails from the local government, led a team of security agents to the communities and consoled the families of those killed in the invasion.

They assured that government would take proactive measures to investigate the attack.

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer in the state, DSP Iyechi Odah, confirmed the incident but said only six people were confirmed dead.

She said: "The Commissioner of Police delegated a team of policemen for on-the-spot assessment because of

peace talks going on in the town. So, the Commissioner of Police delegated the Deputy Commissioner of Police. Operations and others who went for on-the-spot assessment to enable us get the details of the report. They are yet to come back."

Reacting to the killings yesterday, visibly angry Governor Dave Umahi, who visited the affected communities, said local herdsmen in the areas who the state government had an understanding with, committed the havoc.

He said those who migrated to the area were convinced to leave, adding that the killings took place after they had left.

"We feel so sad that this kind of thing should happen in our state. I am going to escalate this to the highest authorities in the country to ensure these people don't get away with this," the governor stated.

In another development, following the unabated killings and destruction of properties in Effium and Ezza-Effium communities in Ohaukwu Local Government Area of Ebonyi State, Governor David Umahi, yesterday said the stakeholders arrested in connection with the crisis would remain in detention until peace returned to the area.

The governor, who stated this during the second round of meetings to resolve the issue, which started on Monday at the Christian Ecumenical Centre, Abakaliki, warned that if the killings continued, his administration would charge those indicted for murder.

He visited the war-torn communities yesterday and assured them of government's commitment towards ensuring lasting peace in Effium and Ezza Effium in the state.

Umahi also visited Ishielu LGA to ascertain the current situation of the recent killings and condole with the families of the deceased.

He said: "The killings should stop from today; if it continues, I will hunt for the leaders and charge them for murder. Enough is enough. You have a lot to lose if the crisis continues. You can't call for genocide against the people. The ring road project maybe delayed if the crisis continues."

"When you see evil, you have to speak out. I commend those

of you who have done that. I'm pleading with you, I am begging you. There's a way you will continue to kill, the state will rise against you. I feel so sad. Let us stop this killing. I have no money to rebuild houses. If I am to do that, it will be in Ezza-Ezilo. The people we are holding, we will continue to hold them."

The meeting ended with a strong commitment by both sides, Effium and Ezza Effium, to live together in peace as they apologized to themselves and to the state government for the carnage that took place in their respective communities.

"We want to apologize to the state government for the crisis in our communities. We promise to live together in peace. We say no to crisis and war."

## Enugu CP orders full scale

## Face-off: Okorocha, Imo mc

•Okorocha now enemy of Imo, committed a  
•Your action disgraceful —Okorocha

By Chinonso Alozie

**OWERRI**—THE battle between former governor Rochas Okorocha and the traditional ruler of Obinugwu community in Orlu local government area of Imo State, Eze Cletus Ikomuanya, appeared to have no end.

Vanguard gathered yesterday that the duo of Okorocha and Ikomuanya are still talking tough after they clashed on board an aircraft from Imo Airport to Abuja.

Ikomuanya who is also a former chairman of Imo traditional rulers council, through his Media Adviser Kennedy Eweama, said: "The attention of the Obi of Obinugwu and Chancellor, Federal University, Birnin Kebbi, Kebbi State, His Royal Majesty, Eze (Dr) Cletus Ikechukwu Ikomuanya, CON, has been drawn to a mischievous and misleading information, alleging that he granted interview to a news outfit called DIGEST, wherein he purportedly distanced himself from the news of the pummeling of former governor Rochas Okorocha inside Air Peace."

"The said report is false and never happened. Eze Ikomuan-

## investigation

On the killing in Adani, Enugu State commissioner who visited the scene of violence with heads of sister security agencies in the state on Monday for an on-the-spot assessment of damages, assured that his men would collaborate with other security agencies in the state to forestall further occurrence.

Spokesman of the command, Daniel Ndukwe, said in a statement that the police commissioner equally called on the members of the community to eschew violence and be their brothers' keepers.

The statement read: "The Commissioner of Police, Enugu State Command, CP Mohammed Ndatsu Aliyu, in the early hours of March 29, 2021, led a team of heads of sister security agencies in the state and the executive chairman

ya never spoke to anyone from DIGEST.

"The public is accordingly advised to discountenance the report obviously planted by Okorocha's media goons to divert public attention. Okorocha is an enemy of Imo people and will remain so until he is cleansed. No amount of media washing even with white paint can cleanse him of his iniquities. His pariah status in Imo is indelible," the monarch warned.

Reacting through his Special Adviser on Media, Sam Onwuemeodo, Okorocha said: "The little minded element behind the story wrote: Eze Cletus Ikomuanya aboard Air Peace flight to Abuja this morning, accosted Sen. Rochas Okorocha sitting next to him and exploded with so much rage and royal anger."

"If Senator Okorocha had seen his brother Ikomuanya and chose to sit close to him, that action should be highly commended and applauded."

"It showed that Okorocha had behaved not only as a Christian but as a statesman. It showed that he had nothing personal against Ikomuanya."