

## Gunmen kill family of six, others In Benue, kidnap monarch's wives, six children In Taraba

By Peter Duru, Makurdi & Femi Bolaji, Jalingo

**S**uspected armed herdsmen Thursday night reportedly attacked Abagena community which hosts Internally Displaced Persons, IDPs in the outskirts of Makurdi town, killing a family of six and three IDPs.

It was gathered that the marauders who left several persons with gunshot wounds also beheaded some of the victims. The latest incident came less than two years after a similar attack in the same community in April 2021 which claimed seven lives while scores sustained bullet and machete wounds.

Abagena community has been home to victims of armed herders incursions in Benue state since the 2018 New Year's day massacre in Guma and Logo LGAs that claimed the lives of close to 100 persons including women and children.

A local source in the area who spoke on condition of anonymity disclosed that the marauders stormed the community directly opposite the gate of the camp at about 9pm and started shooting sporadically.

He said "people were already preparing to go to bed when everyone started hearing gunshots. They ran, but those they caught up with were killed and butchered while some were beheaded and their heads taken away. As we speak there is tension in the area, people are fleeing

their homes but the fear is that the youths of the area might take over the busy Makurdi-Lafia road to protest the herders killings which have been going on for some time now in our communities since the coming of the dry season."

Reacting to the development, Special Adviser to Governor Samuel Ortom on Security Matters, Colonel Paul Hembra (ret'd.), who described the development as sad, confirmed that two IDPs and a family of six were killed in the attack. He said it took place at about 9pm, adding that women and children were among those killed while the injured had been moved to the hospital for medical care.

He said, "so far, eight corpses, including women and children, have been recovered, and eight others who were seriously injured have been evacuated to the hospital for treatment. Some of the bodies were beheaded and the heads taken away. The bushes are still being combed for more victims. The attack was unprovoked; two of those killed were IDPs. The bandits also stole two motorcycles belonging to the villagers."

According to the Adviser, the casualty figure may likely rise as some other persons who were fatally shot on the chest might not survive the injuries.

He gave the names of those killed as Acho Gbashaor, Joseph Gbashaor, Anshe Dekera, Ancho Kpor, Eunice Gbashaor, Sewuese Gbashaor, Terlumun Ajoh,

Emberga Gbashaor and Donald Gbashaor.

Contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer, Superintendent, SP, Catherine Anene who confirmed the development said she was yet to receive full details of the attack.

### Gunmen kidnap monarch's wives, 6 children in Taraba

Meanwhile, the reign of terror has once again resurfaced in Taraba state following the abduction of eight family members of a second class chief in the state. It was gathered that two wives and six children of the chief of Mutumbiyu in Gassol

Local Government Area of Taraba state, Justice Sani Muhammed (rtd) were abducted by kidnappers.

The abduction was said to have occurred at the residence of the monarch in Jalingo, the state capital while he was away.

The state police command have also confirmed incident. Spokesman of the police in Taraba, DSP Usman Abdullahi said efforts to rescue the abducted persons have commenced.

## Warri agog as it prepares for Rt Rev Ewherido's ordination

**T**HE oil city of Warri, Delta State is set to host, on 9th February, 2023, what promises to be the largest gathering of Christian faithful in the metropolis in recent times, as the newly appointed

Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Warri, Rt. Rev. Msgr. Dr. Anthony Owayero Ewherido will be ordained.

A statement by Rev. Fr. E. Obadjere, Director, Justice Development and Peace Commission (J. D.P.C.), Warri Diocese, said, "the Holy Martyrs of Uganda Minor Seminary, venue of the ceremony, and its adjoining Bishops' court premises are already wearing a new look as the date draws nearer".

According to the statement, "the appointment of Rt. Rev. Msgr. Anthony Ewherido as Bishop of Warri Diocese by Pope Francis has been greeted with widespread jubilation across the Diocese and everyone awaits his episcopal ordination and installation ceremony with joyous

anticipation. Catholic sons and daughters of Warri Diocese across the globe will be returning home in their hundreds to grace the historic occasion. Likewise all priests of Warri Diocese in the Diaspora who have already indicated their intention to attend the august event.

"Observedly, even corporate bodies and institutions around Warri/Effurun metropolis are already readjusting their schedules to free up that date as the twin cities will witness an unusual human and vehicular traffic that may impact on normal business schedules. Government functionaries, traditional rulers, professional bodies, the academia, youth bodies, women groups etc are all gearing up to join Christ's faithful of Warri Diocese and the not less than sixty Catholic Bishops and other religious leaders across the country for the great event. God's children will gather in their thousands to celebrate this precious gift of God to Warri Diocese. A red-letter day!

"The Holy Martyrs of Uganda Minor Seminary, venue of the ceremony, and its adjoining Bishops' court premises are already wearing a new look as the date draws nearer. There is something very significant about the Minor Seminary as venue of the ceremony. That was the first place of pastoral assignment where Msgr Anthony Ewherido served as head. He was the Rector (1988- 1992), two years after his priestly ordination and there he unleashed his youthful energies so dexterously and built a reputation of creativity, brilliance, discipline and pastoral commitment that endeared him to many, especially his homilies which resonated in the hearts of many and attracted worshippers from outside the seminary community who traveled long distances on Sundays to the Chapel to listen to his beautiful heart-piercing homilies.

"Rev. Fr. Silvanus Anamali, a highly respected senior brother of the presbyterium once described the era in these words: 'People came from far and near to listen to the wisdom of Solomon'.