

Rivers DPO: Police arrest 6 suspects

By Daniel Abia & Davies Theamnachor

PORT HARCOURT— Operatives of the Rivers State Police Command have arrested six people from Odumude in Akoh Kingdom, Ahoada East Local Government Area of the state over the killing of the Divisional Police Officer, DPO, of Ahoada Police Division, Mr Bako Angbashim.

Cultists terrorising Akoh Kingdom and its environs had on Friday killed and decapitated the body of Bako, a Superintendent of Police, causing serious security breach in the area.

Following the development, Governor Siminalaye Fubara, who expressed worries over the killing, had placed N100 million bounty on the prime suspect fingered in the murder, Gift Okpara Okpolowu, popularly called Zhaba.

The state's Police Commissioner, Nwonyi Emeka, had Saturday, moved into the area with heavy security mobilisation in search of the killer cultists and restoration of peace and normalcy to the troubled area.

However, Governor Fubara, who was enraged by the development, yesterday, convened an emergency security council meeting at Government House, Port Harcourt, with heads of all security agencies in the state to review the situation.

The meeting was attended by, Brig. Gen. E. Effiong, 6 Division Garrison Commander, Nigerian Army; Group Captain A. Idris, Commander 115, Special Operation Group; Commodore D.O.C. Igbo, Commander NNS, Pathfinder; CP Emeka, Rivers State Commissioner of Police; Director, Department of State Services, Rivers State Command

●Fubara charges security chiefs to smoke out killers ●Says Rivers not safe haven for criminals ●Residents desert community— Police ●Arase comiserates with IGP, Rivers CP

and Commandant Basil Igwebueze, NSCDC Commandant, Rivers State Command and others, according to a statement by the governor's Special Assistant on Media, Boniface Onyedi.

This came as Chairman of the Police Service Commission, Dr. Solomon Arase, condemned the murder and beheading of the DPO of Ahoada in Rivers State, SP Bako Angbashim, who was ambushed with his men while trying to contain the bloody attack by a deadly gang of cultists in the Odumude area of Ahoada East.

Fubara in the meeting tasked the security agencies to get the prime suspect (Gift Okpara Okpolowu) at all cost as a clear statement that the state was not a safe haven for criminals.

The governor, who described the incident as unfortunate and barbaric, sympathised with the Police and the family of the slain officer and vowed to make the state unsafe for criminal activities, expressing confidence in the security agencies to apprehend the culprits.

He said: "It is really unfortunate that in our state where we are doing everything to reduce crime rate, a group of miscreants portrays the state as being unsafe. We honestly feel very sad over this incident. As a government, we will not rest until whoever is responsible for this act is brought to book."

"We have gone further to show our commitment in this issue by placing a bounty on the criminals and also suspended the

traditional ruler of that locality. We will do everything on our part to ensure we get to the end of this matter, we must get him at all cost.

"Rivers State has never and will not be a home of criminality. I believe that the calibre of men that are heading the security unit of the state will do everything within their powers to settle these matters."

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Meanwhile, the CP, Emeka, along with his management team and tactical units, Saturday, conducted an operation in search of the dare-devil killers and arrested six suspects.

The police spokesperson, Grace Inginge-Koko, in a statement in Port Harcourt, yesterday, regretted that residents of the community have all fled for safety.

Inginge-Koko said: "The state Commissioner of Police, Mr. Emeka, along with his management team and tactical units, conducted an operation on September 9, 2023 at approximately 0600hrs in Odumude community, Ahoada East LGA, Rivers State with the objective to recover the deceased DPO's body and conduct an on-the-spot assessment of the community."

"During this operation, six suspects were apprehended within the community. Among the items seized were a locally crafted pistol and various charms. These suspects and

the confiscated items are currently under police custody and are undergoing interrogation at the State CID, Port Harcourt. As a result of these developments, the community has been evacuated by its residents.

"Furthermore, a new DPO, SP Zuokumor Richard, has been assigned to the division. He is accompanied by half a unit of men from Mopol 48, one-third unit from Mopol 19, 56 and tactical teams.

"He has been tasked with a thorough search of the area, apprehension of the culprits responsible for the DPO's demise, recovery of the body and location of any operational weapons used. This operation will continue while the investigation remains ongoing."

Arase comiserates with IGP, Rivers CP

PSC chairman, Arase, who commiserated with the IGP Mr. Olukayode Egbetokun; Rivers CP, Mr. Emeka and the family of the slain senior police officer "on this unfortunate development, especially now that the nation was gradually winning the war against criminals and criminality across the country."

Arase noted that the murder of the gallant officer, who fought till the end to save Odumude community "will not in any way extinguish the indomitable fighting spirit of our Police Officers in the war against social disorders."

He promised that the commission would do everything within its constitutional powers to support and encourage the Police to ensure that the criminals are apprehended and brought to justice.

Arase said the death of SP Angbashim known for his gallantry and commitment to duty would never be in vain, adding that his colleagues should be challenged to use his death in active service as a motivation to sanitize the security environment.

26 die in Niger boat mishap, several others missing ●Over 100 persons on board

By Wole Mosadomi

MINNA—Tragedy has struck in Niger State as 24 people have been confirmed dead in a boat mishap.

The sad incident occurred in Jabba and Kainii Dam in Gbajibo, Minna.

Acting Director-General of Niger State Emergency Management Agency, NSEMA, Garba Salihu, also confirmed that members of his agency have mobilised to

the spot for rescue operation.

the victims were said to be from Gbajibo, Ekwa and Yankya communities and were on their way to their farms at the other side of the River Niger, which is old Gbajibo."