

## **Report: Ezeagu-Enugu Army Invasion, Civilian House Burnings And Allied Atrocities**

**Grand Findings:** At Veiled Invitation/Instigation Of Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen, Stationed Personnel Of The Nigerian Army Of Enugu 82 Division Invaded Four Imezi-Owa Villages Of Ezeagu With War-Grade Weapons, Burned Down Ten Civilian Houses In Residential Areas, Abducted 15-17-Year-Old Chisom Okafor (Female) And Scores Of Others Including Three Young Males, Forced Hundreds To Flee Their Homes And In The End-Deployed False Labelling, Ethno-Religious Profiling, Falsehood And Concoction Of Stories As Weapons Of Defence, Justification, Impunity And Repeat-Atrocities

**Intersociety & Southeast CLO: Enugu-Nigeria, Tuesday May 19, 2026:** Following the conclusion of our Joint Investigation on Ezeagu-Enugu Army invasion, civilian house burnings and allied atrocities, **the Report's Findings** have revealed that the Army invasion and Conduct-Atrocities thereto, took place at the instigation of the leaders of the Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen who had since 2010 become a nightmare and an existential threat to the indigenes of most of the 14 autonomous and first class villages across the Ezeagu Local Government Area. The constantly threatened autonomous communities of the ancient and historically respected Local Government include Umumba, Imezi-Owa (epicentre of recent Army attacks and Jihadist Herdsmen terror), Ogwofia, Umaji, Umuagba-Owa, Ezema-Owa, Eziowa-Aguobu, Ozom-Aguobu, Ozom-Mgbagbu-Owa, Eziowa-Mgbagbu-Owa, Awaha, Oghe, Olo, Owa, Umana and Obinofia.

**Findings** from our Six-Man Investigative Team recently sent to the area revealed that in the two days (May 5 and May 6, 2026) of the Nigerian Army's operation, ten civilian houses or dwelling homes located in residential areas were burnt down to ashes and other valuable properties wantonly destroyed. The Army personnel also abducted a 15-17-Year-Old Miss Chisom Okafor who was looking after her aged grandmother and falsely labelled her: "IPOB/ESN informant". Three young males said to be in their 20s and indigenes of Akwuke-Umudim of Imezi-Owa, namely: Ndubuisi Chikelu, Thank God Chikelu and Chidi Nosike, were also abducted. The Army attack also forced hundreds of defenceless indigenous youths in the area and in their 20s and 30s, to flee their family homes and lawful occupations so as to avoid being killed or abducted and disappeared under the pretext that they are "IPOB/ESN informants or collaborators"; or sexually harassed and abused, if they are young married or unmarried women.

**Field Report Of The Army Attack:** According to eyewitnesses and other community sources, instructions from the authorities of the Nigerian Army, 82 Division in Enugu, under Major Gen Oluremi Fadairo as GOC and the Government of Enugu State were given to Ezeagu Unit of the State Forest Guards to invite local vigilantes for an important meeting and when the local vigilantes arrived at the venue of the meeting, they were instantly disarmed by the military and accused of "collaborating with ESN". The disarmed local vigilantes were later forced to lead the soldiers into the forest where "the ESN camp is located" and on getting closer, the soldiers reportedly laid ambush, took their enemies unaware and opened fire, destroying their camp-leading to many of the armed non-state actors taking cover.

The field report added that the incident took place on Tuesday, May 5, 2026 and that in the early morning of Wednesday, May 6 2026, the attacked armed non-state actors retaliated and angrily attacked the local vigilantes and disarmed them and accused them of sabotaging their efforts to keep their communities safe from Fulani Herdsmen attacks. The field report noted that the shooting incident between soldiers and armed non-state actors took place inside the Ajali River Forest Valley and surrounding farmlands; more than two kilometers away from communal residential areas. Following the above, the vigilantes reported the incident to Ezeagu Local Government Chairman and Enugu State Police Command and on May 6, 2026, the 82 Division Army personnel stationed at Ezeagu's Imezi-Owa Local Government Headquarters, joined by police, forest guards and local vigilantes were mobilized under the coordination and leadership of the Army personnel and moved to the Ajali River Forest Valley, leading to another round of gun battle with the armed non-state actor fighting parties ("the Eastern Security Network"); and in the melee that followed, three Army personnel were wounded in a crossfire, forcing them to retreat, reinforce and return to the scene at about 2:30pm of the same day.

Instead of heading back to the scene (Ajali River Forest Valley), the Army personnel with war-grade weapons invaded four residential areas of Imezi-Owa's Akwuke-Umudim, Abonuzu, Eziama and Eziowa villages and launched a war-grade attack including wantonly burning and destroying civilian houses, numbering about ten and other valuable properties. The Army personnel were also accused by some locals of alleged looting of domestic animals, motorcycles and electronics. Some locals also reported an incident they claimed to have taken place on Sunday, May 10, 2026, that they "saw two armed military officers on uniform guarding and escorting some Fulani herdsmen with their cattle in their farms" and that "these Fulani Herdsmen have regularly been destroying our crops and we couldn't do anything to avoid being killed or have our properties including houses and farms razed, after which the Army personnel, police and Government will turn around and falsely label as IPOB/ESN members or their collaborators or informants".

**Names Of Abducted Indigenes Of Akwuke-Umudim Of Imezi-Owa:** Scores of innocent indigenes of the area especially those in productive age-brackets, in their thirties or under thirties were also abducted and their names as obtained from their families by field investigators included: Male Citizens Ndubuisi Chikelu, Thank God Chikelu and Chidi Nosike and 15-17-Year-Old underage, Miss Chisom Okafor whose aged grandmother was trapped inside one of the houses set ablaze by the Army personnel. Chisom Okafor was later found to have been dumped at Police SARS Unit of the Enugu State Police Command, located opposite Diamond Estate, along Enugu New Market Road. The whereabouts of the three young males have remained unaccounted since May 6, 2026 and while the Nigerian Army admitted "arresting a female who is one of the IPOB/ESN informants or collaborators", the Division declined comment on the abducted male youths including the three named above. It is important to inform that the mobile phone numbers of the three abducted youths were obtained but withheld for security reasons.

### **Ezeagu Civil Servants, Others As Owners Of The Six Burnt Down Residential Houses:**

Our collected statistics also indicated that some Ezeagu civil servants living in Enugu and others including children of the retirees and late family breadwinners were among the owners of the six residential houses burnt to ashes by the Nigerian Army personnel and they included: Chukwuka Uwakwe, Ifeanyi Uwakwe, Ezeaka Uwakwe and the Okafors: Dominic Okafor, Onyema Okafor and Okenna Okafor. Their mobile phone numbers were also obtained but withheld for security reasons.

### **Ezeagu Army Attack Likely To Have Been Instigated By Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen:**

It has independently been found that the Wednesday, May 6, 2026 Nigerian Army's war-grade attack in some communities and villages of Ezeagu, was likely to have been instigated by the Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen and their leaders or "Six Fulani Alhajis in Ezeagu" under the leadership of "Sarki Fulani in Ezeagu" who is of Enugu 9<sup>th</sup> Mile residency. According to Special Ezeagu Fulani Herdsmen Terror Report released by **Intersociety** on December 16, 2025, *more than 20 Dens (Camps) of Jihadist Fulani Terror manned by Invader-Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen in many forests belonging to several communities in Ezeagu Local Government Area of Enugu State have been discovered. The **Jihadist Fulani's 20 Dens of Terror** are structurally divided into six layers, with each camp coordinated by a Fulani Alhaji who is also a member of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria-MACABAN and placed in charge of a group of Ezeagu forests and farmlands and their surrounding residential areas where his herds of cattle roam freely and unchecked; destroying lives, properties and livelihoods of the indigenes. The six-layered Ezeagu Jihadist Fulani structures are found to be linked to the Ajali River, its Valley and farmlands and have become a terror headquarter from where jihadist activities of the Fulani Herdsmen are coordinated and spread across many, if not most of the fourteen Ezeagu Communities and their villages.*

### **Nigerian Army Stationed In Ezeagu Since 2025 At The Invitation Of Fulani Leaders:**

Facts from **the Intersociety's** Report of December 16, 2025 revealed that various communities in Ezeagu Local Government Area have been living in terrible fear following terror activities of the Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen including widespread destruction of their farmlands, constant sexual harassment, assault and rape of their non-menopausal women. Killings and abductions including abduction of Christian clerics have also become rampant in the area especially since 2010; in addition to sacking by Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen of their ancestral farmlands especially massive farmlands located around the Ajali River and its Valley. The "Eke Abonuzu Cassava Market", one of the biggest cassava markets in the South-East, was also forced to be closed since 2011 due to taking over of cassava farmlands by Jihadist Fulani cattle herders. Despite several outcries and written representations by victims to past and present Governments of Enugu State, the attacks have continued to be widespread and unchecked; forcing some members of the affected communities to seek for alternative solutions including forming local vigilantes and involvement of militia groups such as Eastern Security Network (ESN), among others.

It was as a result of the above not going down well with the Ezeagu Invader-Fulani leaders and their conspirators that led to overt or covert invitation of the personnel of the 82 Division of the Nigerian Army in Enugu, leading to stationing of military personnel, their commanders and war-grade military equipment at the Imezi-Owa Local Government Headquarters since November 2025. It must further be informed that this is not the first time the Army personnel of the 82 Division launched attack in the area, as more than four of such attacks were launched in mid-November 2025 alone. The armed state actor attackers, according to locals interviewed, told our field investigators that “the Army personnel blamed the indigenes of the area for harbouring the attackers of the Fulani cows who are members of the ESN hiding inside the Ajali River Valley and its surrounding farmlands”. It is also recalled that the Army attacks in the area using helicopters were carried out on Friday, December 12, 2025 in villages of Imezi-Owa, Oha-Ndiagu, Olo, Agu-Obu-Owa and Mgbagbu-Owa, inflicting heavy damages including house burnings.

**Truth Told By The 82 Division Of The Nigerian Army, Enugu:** Having carefully studied and analysed the two statements issued by the 82 Division’s Directorate of Army Public Relations in defence of the ill-fated, unprofessional and human rights abusive operation, **we** boldly, factually and conscientiously hold that the only truth contained in the two statements was that three of their personnel were injured during the exchange of gunfire with armed non-state actor fighting parties or ESN. We wish to add that the gunfire exchanges and injuries sustained by Army personnel are found to have taken place around the Ajali River Forest Valley-which is over two kilometres away from the scene of the civilian house burnings; where abduction of scores of innocent Akwuke-Umudim indigenes also took place. The Nigerian Army was found in the end to have deliberately, despicably and condemnably **Deployed Instruments of False Labelling, Ethno-Religious Profiling, Falsehood and Concoction of Stories as Weapons of Defence, Justification, Impunity and Repeat-Atrocities**.

The Enugu 82 Division of the Nigerian Army also in its statement of May 8, 2026, signed by Lt Col Olabisi Olalekan deliberately kept mute and looked the other side over the terror activities of the Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen in Ezeagu and environs particularly since 2010; a clear case of selective and discriminatory operations and law enforcements and testament of the fact that such operations are operationally designed for the protection of the jihadist Fulani Herdsmen and creation of vulnerable environment for indigenes of Ezeagu communities, their properties and livelihoods to be constantly attacked by the jihadists masquerading as “pastoralist cattle herders in indigenous lands”; more so when indigenes and travellers in hundreds have been killed or abducted in the area by Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen. According to Sahara Reporters of December 18, 2025, “in July 2024, it was reported that at least ten persons were reported dead and several houses burnt following an attack on Mgbagbu-Owa Community in Ezeagu Local Government Area of Enugu State by Fulani Herdsmen”. The Nigerian Army was also found by the Report to have engaged in wanton desecration of Igbo traditional institutions and values by demolishing an innocent shrine located in the same communal residential areas, only to turn around and criminally labelled it as “one of the shrines used for criminal activities”. Critics say: “the destruction of the shrine was part of Nigerian Army’s notorious policy of criminal labelling and concoction of stories to justify the unlawful and unprofessional operation for purpose of liability or culpability, directly or vicariously”.

### **Congregation Of Lies Told By Enugu 82 Division Of The Nigerian Army:**

- That “upon reaching a suspected hideout (around Ajali River Forest Valley and not in residential areas), we were met with heavy gunfire, resulting in fire outbreak triggered by the accidental detonation from stored Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) inside the building (during) the exchange of gunfire”.
- That “the operation was carried out on May 6, 2026, as part of efforts to track down alleged terrorist collaborators operating within the community”. **Note: this falsehood was dished out** against the backdrop of the fact that most of the burnt down residential houses were under lock and key as their owners and their families reside in Enugu as civil servants and students and were not around when their dwelling houses were burnt down to ashes.
- That “suspected IPOB/ESN fighters launched the attack from a building believed to have been used as a hideout. While troops were advancing on foot to the community, they were attacked from a building, resulting in injuries to three personnel”.
- That “subsequent searches conducted around the area led to the recovery of additional IEDs, improvised hand grenades, and a shrine allegedly used for ritual activities and the shrine was thoroughly combed and destroyed to prevent continued usage for criminal activities and to safeguard the community members”.

### **Our Demands:**

- Government of Enugu is called upon to liaise with the innocent families of the burnt or destroyed houses and other valuable properties for purposes of auditing and rebuilding or replacing them, in addition to payment of adequate compensations and prevention of further occurrences; failure of which will likely leave the affected families, friends and well-wishers with no other option than to sue the Army's 82 Division and Government of Enugu State for damages incurred, payment of adequate compensations and tendering of unreserved public apologies. Government of Enugu State is also called upon to take concrete steps at ensuring that security agencies particularly personnel of the Nigerian Army deployed to the State or any part thereof, respect and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms of members of the affected or victim communities in the line of their operations. The concerned Army and other security personnel must also be compelled to discontinue the widespread use of false/criminal labelling, ethno-religious profiling, trump-up allegations and transfer of criminal liability. The reckless operational code of targeting and attacking innocent civilians and their properties in lieu of criminal parties must stop. The Enugu State Government must at all times ensure these by tying public funds allocated to the Army as “counterparty operational logistics” to strict adherence to such human rights and fundamental freedoms’ conditions, rules, processes and procedures.
- The 82 Division of the Nigerian Army must de-criminalize its operations in the South-East and desist from “IPOB/ESN-phobia”. Such de-criminalization must include putting an end to hate and discriminatory soldiering and law enforcements and operations as well as putting an end to mass criminalization, criminal/false labelling, operational lies and falsehoods including concoction and bastardization of intelligence and crime scene evidence; as well as reckless resort to hearsay conclusions and summary or jungle justice.

*The 82 Division of the Nigerian Army in Enugu and the Enugu State Police Command must unconditionally release alive and in good health conditions Young Citizens Chisom Okafor (female of 15-17 years of age) and Young Male Citizens Ndubuisi Chikelu, Thank God Chikelu and Chidi Nosike and others likely to have been overtly or covertly arrested or abducted since May 6, 2026.*

- *The Government of Enugu State is formally called upon to end the unchecked terror activities of Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen in Ezeagu particularly since 2010. The State Government must live up to its constitutional responsibility of ensuring protection and safety of lives and properties in the Local Government including immediate recovery of the Ajali River and its massive farmlands from the hands of Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen and counter armed non-state actors involved.*

**Signed:**

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**Attachment:**

A copy of video, photo and audio documentary exposing the Nigerian Army attack in Ezeagu