

5 farmers killed as herders attack Benue border community

Similarly, on Tuesday evening, five farmers were killed when suspected armed herders attacked Udeku Maav-Ya community in Mbakyol Council Ward, Turan District of Kwande Local Government Area of Benue State, disrupting ongoing harvest activities in the border community.

The attack, which left several others injured, occurred about 4p.m., while residents were busy harvesting their yams and bambara nuts, heightening fears over food production and security in one of Benue State's major agrarian areas.

Confirming the incident, Chairman of Kwande local government council, Mr. Tersua Yarkwan, said five people lost their lives during the attack, noting that the assailants did not immediately withdraw from the community after carrying out the assault.

He said: "This is a very disturbing incident. Five of our farmers were killed while harvesting their crops, and the attackers stayed back in the area for some time, which further heightened tension among residents.

"Kwande is a border local government with difficult terrain and this has continued to expose our people to attacks. These repeated assaults, especially during the harvest season, pose a serious threat to food security."

According to him, farming activities in the area have been severely disrupted as many residents now avoid going to their farms for fear of further attacks.

Also speaking, a former supervisory councillor in the council, Mr. Lawrence Akerigba, said the community was caught unprepared by the attack, alleging that residents had been under sustained pressure from armed herders.

"Our people have been facing constant attacks marked by shootings, destruction of crops, homes and economic trees, as well as restricted access to water sources," Akerigba said.

He disclosed that those confirmed killed included Tyozua Gyuse, Gbaga Gyuse and Tersuur Ijighka, adding that the identities of two other victims were yet to be established at press time.

"Some residents are still missing, and search operations are ongoing. The situation remains tense," he added.

Akerigba further lamented that repeated attacks had forced the closure of schools, churches and markets in the community, decrying what he described as the absence of sustained security intervention.

"We are appealing for urgent and consistent security presence. Our communities cannot continue to live in fear," he said.

Efforts to reach Benue State police command spokesperson, Udeme Edet, were unsuccessful at press time last night.