

Benue: Five killed in Otukpo, many injured in fresh herdsmen attack



By Peter Duru, Makurdi

At least five people have been reportedly killed in an attack by suspected armed herdsmen on Entekpa community, Adoka, in Otukpo Local Government Area, LGA, of Benue State.

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The attack, which took place on Monday evening, also left several villagers with gunshot wounds, while scores remain unaccounted for, according to a source in the area.

The community members disclosed that the attackers arrived with a large number of cattle before suddenly opening fire on residents.

“They came with many cows, and nobody spoke to them. Suddenly, they started shooting innocent people and burning houses,” he said.

The source added that the casualty figure could have been far higher if residents had not fled quickly. “Many people were saved because they managed to escape the unprovoked attack,” he noted.

Chief Oliver Inalegwu, the Ward Head of Entekpa, confirmed the incident, saying, “it was herdsmen that attacked the village yesterday and killed five people.”

He described the development shocking. “The village is now empty. We went there with the Council Chairman this morning, and there was blood everywhere, it is shocking,” he said.

Otukpo Local Government Chairman, Maxwell Ogiri, who visited the scene, explained that the attack involved careful planning.

“At first, it seemed like strangers and cattle were coming from one direction. The cattle were just a decoy,” Ogiri said.

He said the herdsmen approached from another direction, taking strategic positions on trees before launching the assault.

“Instantly, five people were killed, and others sustained gunshot injuries. The injured have been rushed to different hospitals,” the Chairman said.

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Ogiri said the attackers initially burnt a house, which marked the start of the violence, before shooting indiscriminately at villagers.

He assured that security forces, including the military, had since moved into the area to contain the situation. “When I was leaving, the military were moving in large numbers, and we mobilized our civil protection guards,” Ogiri said.

The Chairman highlighted the vulnerability of the populace saying “the locals are largely defenseless, with only small hunting guns to protect themselves.

“The attack has created a humanitarian crisis, as many displaced residents are now scattered among relatives in nearby communities rather than in formal IDP camps,” he lamented.

Ogiri added that the Deputy Governor had promised relief materials for the displaced, while police were reportedly sending additional troops to restore security.

Efforts to reach the Benue State Police Command spokesperson, DSP Udeme Edet, for comments were unsuccessful.