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SOLDIERS KILL 6 MIGRANT HERDERS IN SAMINAKA

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Soldiers have allegedly shot dead six migrant Fulani herders in on Wednesday afternoon in Saminaka, Lere Local Government Area of Kaduna state after tying them up in the bush, residents of the area said. The soldiers were said to have accosted them on their way to their camp in the outskirts of Saminaka town and arrested without anyone resisting.

"The soldiers later interrogated them and immediately took them to an isolated area, tied their hands behind them and shot each in the back. The soldiers left their corpses and drove their vehicle away," a source said.

Sarkin Lere Garba A. Mohammed described the incident as 'unfortunate', and said those victims were Fulani nomads who come to areas seasonally with their livestock and people in the area were on 'familiar terms with them.' He said local government authorities have commenced investigation on the case adding that there was no tension in the area.

The Chairman of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders' Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) Alhaji Ahmadu Suleiman said the corpses of the victims were later recovered and buried yesterday morning. He said the soldiers were said to have accused the deceased of carrying guns before killing them but his Association hasn't independently verified the claim. He said one herder who escaped will bullet wounds is receiving medical attention.

Chairman of the Local Government Council Ibrahim Lazuru confirmed the killings and said the Council took the responsibility of removing the corpses from where they were dumped before the funeral prayers. He said the Council had contacted the head of military operations in the area, a colonel "who said the soldiers were acting on instructions."

He said the Council will write a protest letter to the state government and military authorities over the killings. "We shall inform the state Governor and petition the General Officer Commanding, 1 Division."

Both the Director of Defence Information Major General Chris Olukolade and the Deputy Director, Army Public Relations, 1 Division, Colonel Usman Abdul could not be reached by telephone for comments. They did not reply text messages sent to them on the matter.

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