

Ortom calls for self defence in Benue as gunmen kill 4 in hometown

● Says it's no longer fashionable to cry for help

From Hope Abah Emmanuel, Makurdi

Governor Samuel Ortom of Benue State on Wednesday urged residents, especially those in rural areas, to arm and defend themselves against their attackers, using legal weapons.

He said this became necessary because it was no longer fashionable to continue to cry for help.

"We must now be at alert and ready to confront these killers. This is another way we can assist the security agencies in combating this menace since they are obviously overstretched beyond limits," he said.

The governor, in a statement by his spokesman, Nathaniel Ikyur, spoke against the backdrop of fresh killings of five people by people suspected to be armed herders in his Ndzorov hometown in Guma Local Government Area in the early hours of Tuesday.

He listed names of the victims as Clement Tortiv, Enoch Utim, Terkimbi Kutaer, Mtaaega Tyogbea and Aondoaver Swende.

He said two persons: Sunday Gaga and Torkwase Igbira were injured in the attack by people suspected to be herdsmen.

However, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), SP Catherine Anene, while confirming the killings earlier, said four people were killed.

"The killing in Gbajimba, Guma Local Government Area is confirmed. Four persons were killed and one person is currently receiving treatment. Investigation is ongoing," Anene said.

Meanwhile, the Chairman of Myetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) in the state, Alhaji Risku Mohammed, said his attention was drawn to the incident during a security meeting with the state government.

He said he had contacted his members and was waiting to hear from them if they knew anything about the matter.