

NEWS.

Suspected cultists kill five, torch houses in Benue

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PALPABLE fear has engulfed residents of Agboughul community in Makurdi, the Benue state capital as five people were allegedly killed by rampaging cultists, who also set some houses in the area ablaze.

The Guardian gathered from the community that the rampaging invaders have also forced the six traditional

rulers within the area and their families to desert the locality over fear of the unknown, since it was believed that most of the victims of the attack were innocent people, who are not members of any of the other cult groups.

An elderly man in the area who spoke to journalists under condition of anonymity said: "My son, as you can see, I am the only elderly person remaining in this community, every other person has left with their families to the hinterland and Makurdi town or to the nearby villages to save their lives."

"These wicked boys (cultists) are fond of operating in the night or sometimes in the day time. The moment they see a house they want to attack, they will strike and yesterday they killed five people. Nobody is sleeping in this area peacefully, and I want to tell you that even the traditional rulers about six of them are no longer here. They have run away with their families. But as for me, I don't know where to run to and I am still here", the old man revealed.

The old man continued that even as a detachment of armed mobile policemen as well as men of the Special Anti Robbery Squad (SARS) are on a daily patrol of the area to help maintain law and order, peace has continue to elude the community as the bad boys always find loophole to strike when security is lax.

While commending the efforts of the police and vigilante group in trying to maintain the peace in the community, the aged man particularly lauded the efforts of the vigilante people whom he said stay till daybreak in providing security to the people.

The Guardian recalls that the Agboughul community in Makurdi has over the years been known for communal and cult uprisings, which had at several instances rendered people dead.

The State Police Public Relations Officer, Daniel Ezeala denied knowledge of the killings and burning of houses, saying if there was any attack, the police would have known, assuring that the command was on top of the situation of the security situation in the state.