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# Herdsmen, farmers clash in Benue over implementation of anti-open grazing law

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Herdsmen and farmers have clashed in some communities of Benue State following the full implementation of the state anti-open grazing law. This is coming barely three days of its implementation.

A source told The Guardian that suspected herdsmen invaded and attacked some communities in Logo Local Council of the state, killing a 40-year-old Ortse Kwaghdoo and injuring a 70-year-old Hinger Akaa.

A similar incidence was also said to have occurred at Orukan in Ogbadibo Local Council of the state yesterday morning where one person was shot dead, leaving three others with gunshot injuries.

The Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Moses Yamu, who confirmed the incident in Orukan, said the skirmish was between the herdsmen and the vigilante group who insisted on enforcing the law.

At Logo Local Council, The Guardian learnt that a few days to full commencement of the implementation of the law, there was a massive influx of strange herdsmen and their cattle into Gaambe-Tiev area and they settled in Ukemberagya/Tswarev council ward at Zaki Hemem, Tyo-Afia, Tse Gusa, Tse Agir, Ordughga Nagwa, Tsafa, Chia Orabum and Jootar axis.

The herdsmen and their cattle also settled in Mbagber ward, particularly at Gov-Uwev, while in Tombo Council ward, they were at Azege, Anyibe and Fanu axis.

An indigene of Gaambe Tiev, who spoke to The Guardian, appealed to the authorities to mobilise security agents to the border areas to check further skirmishes with the herdsmen.

He expressed fears that the marauders will ravage their crops now that farmers are yet to harvest their crops.



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Special Adviser to Governor Samuel Ortom on Security, Col. Edwin Jando (rtd.) who is also the state Chairman, Task Force on Implementation of Anti-Open Grazing Law, said the persons attacked were fishing when the herdsmen struck and killed one person, adding that one of the herdsmen has been arrested.

Jando said: “Yes, there was an attack in Logo but we have arrested the suspected herdsman. So, there is no panic in the area as we speak. Everything is calm and we are on top of the situation.”

But, commenting on the implementation of the anti-grazing law, the national coordinator of Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), Garus Gololo said most of their members were going out of Benue, because they could no longer move freely.

He said their cattle were dying, as there is no food and water for them, maintaining that the state government made no provisions for land anywhere, as the lands have been leased to his members to ranch.

Although, there is widespread celebration by the Benue people over the government’s giant strides in implementing the law, people living along border lines, which constitute flash points of attack over the years, are not sleeping with their two eyes closed due to the fear of attacks by the herders who are very volatile and unpredictable.

The fear is mostly in communities bordering Nasarawa, Taraba, Kogi and Cameroon, which are already full of the herdsmen and their cattle.



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