

# Livestock guards didn't kill in Guma, says Ortom

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Makurdi

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[FILE PHOTO] Benue State Governor Samuel Ortom



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Governor Samuel Ortom of Benue State has denied that his livestock guards were responsible for the invasion of Iyeh community in Guma Council on Wednesday night, which resulted in the death of over 15 people.

He described the accusation as untrue, laughable and baseless.

Terhile Utaan, the All Progressives Congress (APC) House of Representatives candidate for Makurdi/Guma, had at a media briefing in Makurdi yesterday accused the governor of arming the livestock guards with AK-47 rifles. He claimed to have evidence to prove his allegation.

According to him, Ortom has perfected plans to rig the election in six polling units in the area in his favour, among other allegations.

But Ortom said the allegations by the APC candidate were indications that the party was panicky and afraid of impending defeat at the polls.

He explained: “I left no one in doubt for my efforts to end frequent attacks on innocent citizens of the state, including women and children, through the enactment of the open grazing prohibition and ranching establishment law.

“How can I, who enacted a law to protect my people from invaders and also provided amnesty, suddenly turn around to arm militia.



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“Members of the livestock guards are peaceful, harmless young men and women who have been trained to cooperate with conventional security personnel to ensure security of lives and property of the citizenry in the state.

“The APC candidate does not have moral justification to accuse me of such because this is the same set of people who applauded me for enacting the law. This is cheap blackmail by the APC to pull me down, but they will not succeed.”

Also, the publicity secretary of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the state, Bemgba Iortyom, attributed the ills that befall the state to the inability of the APC-led Federal Government to protect lives and property and condemned the allegation as cruel and unfounded.

“I don’t know the parameter the APC used to come out with weighty allegation. PDP is intact with the overwhelming mood and support from the people. Therefore, we are not distracted by their plot to run us down because they are just jittery,” he said.

He described the sudden cancellation of voting at various internally-displaced persons (IDP) camps as unfortunate, noting that it was wrong for the APC-led government to deprive the people of their voting right.

“It is a sad testimony of the APC administration in this country,” he added.



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