

Gunmen murder eight, abduct one in Benue

From Joseph Wantu (Makurdi)
and Abel Abogonye (Lafia)

Kidnap Nasarawa electoral body scribe

EIGHT persons have been reportedly killed at Yelwata Community in Guma Local Council of Benue State by gunmen suspected to be herders.

The attack, which took place about 6.00p.m. on Tuesday, also left two persons with injuries, while one person was abducted.

Chairman of Guma, Caleb Abba, told newsmen that the attackers invaded the community on Yelwata market day, while the people were still in the market, and opened fire on them.

Abba, who lamented that the attack was unprovoked, noted that his people had no issues with the herdsmen

before the attack.

His words: "Yesterday (Tuesday) was Yelwata market day and the people were still in the market around 6.00p.m. when the herdsmen came and started shooting sporadically. In the end, eight people were killed, two injured and one person, who was abducted, is yet to be released till now."

According to the council boss, the injured have been taken to a private hospital for treatment since the doctors in government hospitals are still on strike.

A local, who spoke to *The Guardian* on condition of anonymity, described the attack as shocking, noting that if not for the quick inter-

vention of troops of Operation Whirl Stroke (OPWS), more people would have been killed.

According to him, the troops were still combing the area in search of the invaders at the time of this report.

Confirming the report, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Catherine Anene, said six persons were killed, while two were injured and one abducted.

ALSO, about five gunmen stormed the Lafia residence of the secretary to Nasarawa State Independent Electoral Commission (NASIEC), Mohammed Abubakar, on Tuesday about 11.45p.m., and abducted him.

The kidnap, *The Guardian* learnt, is not unconnected with the coming local council election fixed for October.

Confirming the incident, the PPRO, Ranham Nansel, said the gunmen invaded the home of the NASIEC secretary and abducted him.

He added that a detachment of the Anti-Kidnapping Unit, Police Mobile Force, Counter-Terrorism Unit and other tactical units of the command was led to the scene.

The Commissioner of Police, Adesina Soyemi, called on anyone with useful information that will aid the investigation to call the following phone numbers: 08063899824, 08140237449, 08035429706, 08032875187 and 08037461715.