

Two Killed, 10 Injured As Herdsmen Ambush Farmers In Kogi

By **Atabor Julius** - December 11, 2017



Fulani Herdsmen

Lokoja – No fewer than two persons have been confirmed dead and about 10 sustained various degrees of injuries as suspected Fulani herdsmen ambushed farmers in Ocala Local Government Area of Kogi State.

The incident occurred on Friday in Agabifo, a small village near Abejukolo, headquarters of the local government council, when the farmers and their families numbering over 20 went to their sweet mango (Ogbono) plantation in the night to pick fruits when they were attacked.

According to a resident, the herdsmen, who were having running battles with the villagers over grazing field, had laid ambush and opened fire on the farmers who were picking the fruits, killing two persons, one of them identified as Abuka Awodi on the spot while over 10 persons, mainly women and children, sustained gunshot wounds.

The witness said the dead were evacuated for burial while the wounded were taken to unidentified clinics and traditional gun wound healing centres for treatment.

He said the plantation had been a source of conflict between farmers and herdsmen who have turned the farms into their grazing land.

He added that the tension increased in the area with the recent proclamation by Governor Yahaya Bello that his government would not succumb to pressure to introduce anti-grazing law to curtail the activities of herdsmen in the state.

Speaking recently at the tripartite stakeholders' meeting in the conference hall of Lugard House, Lokoja, between the state government, the Miyyeti Allah Cattle Rearers Association and the traditional rulers, Bello had tacitly given open invitation to all manners of herdsmen to come to the state, provided they were ready to pay taxes.

At the meeting, he charged his subjects to learn peaceful coexistence with the cattle-rearers.

He also read the riot act to the traditional rulers and 21 local council administrators to adopt all available means to coexist with the herders or be ready to be deposed and sacked.

Also, a female rice farmer (names withheld) at Omi Dam in Yagba West Local Government Area was attacked by gun-wielding herdsmen for daring to challenge them when their cattle invaded and destroyed her farm.

INDEPENDENT investigations revealed that the violent activities of the herdsmen increased across the state since the tripartite meeting.

William Aya, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) in the state, said the attack was being investigated to know the actual people that carried out the attack, stressing that until the outcome of the investigation, the police could not narrow it down to the Fulani.

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