

## **Suspected Fulani herdsmen kill seven in Benue community**

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Suspected Fulani herdsmen on Wednesday killed seven people and burnt several homes in attacks on five villages near Udei in Guma Local Government Area of Benue State.

The villages include Tse-Nyamkyume, Tse-Ama, Tse-Uto, among others.

The attackers reportedly invaded the villages as early as 6am when unsuspecting farmers, the majority residents, had left their homes for their farms.

Six bodies were recovered by a detachment of soldiers from the 72 Army Battalion, who were deployed in Udei to restore peace.

The victims include Mr. Uchana Tongov, Yemetse Mtsenem, Mrs. Umar Aperaku and her little boy, Terkimbi. Others are: Ihumban Gwarche and Moses Boniface.

Mrs. Maaga Simeon escaped death but sustained deep cuts on her body. Scores of other residents were displaced.

During an on-the-spot assessment of the situation, a member of the House of Assembly, Avine Agbom, who was accompanied by Mr. Matthew Mnyam, a resident of Udei, condemned the killings and destruction of property by the suspected herdsmen.

The lawmaker blamed the killings on Nasarawa State Government.

He alleged that the assailants camped in the neighbouring state and attacked Tiv farmers in Benue State.

Agbim urged both states to implement the report of a peace committee they set up last year to end attacks in the area.

The lawmaker also called for the establishment of camps at Udei, Igyungu Aze, Daudu and Agan as well as the Local Government Primary School at North Bank, where over 100,000 displaced persons can be cared for by the Benue State Government.

He appealed to the fleeing farmers to remain calm and await government directive on the incident.

Agbom hailed the leader of the military detachment, simply identified as Capt Shola, for the military's prompt intervention and for bringing the bodies of the deceased home for burial.

The lawmaker called for an end to the crisis.

Police spokesman Daniel Ezeala, a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), said seven people were killed in the attack.

Ezeala said the police have deployed their men in the area.