

Suspected herdsmen kill 15 in Taraba

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Suspected Fulani herdsmen attacked Dori and Mesuma villages in Gashaka Local Government of Taraba State on Sunday, killing 15 people, police said yesterday.

Residents said more than 40 people were killed and houses razed by the attackers.

Addressing reporters at the headquarters of the command, Police Commissioner Shaba Alkali said the herdsmen launched attacks on the two villages on Sunday, about 11am.

“A group of people, numbering about 20, suspected to be Fulani herdsmen, invaded and attacked Dori and Mesuma villages via Garbabi ward, Gashaka Local Government, and burnt thatched houses, forcing the villagers to flee to Mayo-Selbe and Sabon Gida,” the police chief said.

He added: “Eight people were killed in Dori village and seven in Mesuma.”

Alkali said when he got the report from the divisional police officer (DPO) in Serti, he mobilised his men and deployed them in the area.

He said the officers could not access the villages with their vehicles due to the poor state of roads.

The police boss said the operatives spent hours trekking to the villages.

He said over 40 mobile police personnel were redeployed from Yola, Adamawa State to the affected areas.

Alkali said detectives cordoned off routes to the communities.

“My detectives are around Bali to make sure that those that carried out the attacks are arrested,” he said.

According to him, two suspects have been arrested.

The police commissioner paraded a 52-year-old man, Ardo Ayuba Iliyasu, as the mastermind of the Dori and Mesuma villages' attacks.

He said Iliyasu convened a meeting of a large number of persons in his home at Garbabi village a few hours before the attacks were launched.

But when interviewed by reporters, the suspect denied involvement in the killings.

The cause of the attacks was not known at press time.