

Policeman, trader, villager killed in Benue

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IT was another orgy of violence in Benue State at the weekend as a policeman was killed and another missing when security men and armed militia clashed.

A villager was also killed in a village. In another, a trader was murdered.

The police confirmed the killing of one of their men during armed militia attack on Yogbo community in Guma Local Government.

The police also said they shot and killed three armed militia men although their members took away their bodies.

Police spokesman Moses Yamu, in statement, confirmed that a villager was also killed.

He added that Yogbo community came under attack from over 200 armed militia, who overran the settlement yesterday.

He said a combined team of soldiers and riot policemen deployed in Yogbo repelled the attack .

However, a member of Yogbo community told our correspondent on telephone that the attackers were Fulani herdsmen, who came with their cattle. He said they also set many houses ablaze.

Also in Anyiin village, the country home of former Governor Gabriel Suswam, a trader simply named Abuchi, was murdered, allegedly by Fulani herdsmen. He was killed on Gbeji – Anyiin road yesterday .

His body was discovered in the bush by policemen near Ayoo Udu village and deposited at the NKST hospital mortuary in Anyiin.

Sources said Fulani militia opened fire at traders, who were in a pick-up vehicle while returning from a local market. Many people were injured.

Yamu said he was yet to get in touch with the DPO in Logo for details.

Also yesterday, Governor Samuel Ortom said he had been sleeping and waking up stronger every day in the face of blackmail and intimidation from high places.

Speaking at Chapel of Grace, Benue Peoples House, Makurdi during a thanksgiving service to mark the state's 42 anniversary, Ortom said he was always strengthened by the overwhelming support of Benue people. He expressed the hope that the state and Nigeria would emerge victorious in the end.

He described comments credited to Inspector General of Police Ibrahim Idris that the killings in Benue were as a result of the Anti-Open Grazing Law as unfortunate and worrisome, especially as it is coming from the number one law enforcement officer.

Ortom called for prayers for both the President and other leaders in the country for God's wisdom for the desired leadership direction.

He advised Benue people against taking laws into their hands, saying their weapon must be prayers. He advised against rumour-mongering, which he said aggravated tension and trauma.

In a sermon, Chaplain Benue Peoples House, Evangelist Daniel Unongo, who preached on the theme: "Behold my servant," said no powers of the devil would subject the destiny of Benue to ridicule.

The state's anniversary cake was cut.