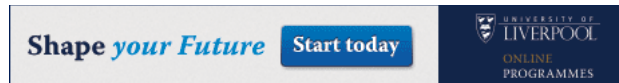


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30 feared killed as Fulani herdsmen, Tiv farmers clash in Benue

Written by Johnson Babajide and Leon Usigbe | Saturday, 22 February 2014 00:00 | font size | Print | Email

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ABOUT 30 people have been killed in a renewed crisis involving Fulani herdsmen and Tiv farmers in Gwer West Local Government Area of Benue State in the last two days.

This followed attacks by Fulani mercenaries on some villages in Guma Local Government Area of the state during the week, where eight people were killed and the personal house of the paramount ruler of the Tiv nation, Dr Akawe Torwula, was burnt down at Tse Torkula.

Six wards in Gwer West Local Government Area were said to have been sacked where an estimated 100,000 persons were displaced.

The secretary of the local government, Mr Mark Dewua, told journalists on Friday in Makurdi, the state capital, that the dead included a 70-year-old woman, one Tyobam, at Terhule Antarctic village, where she had gone to visit her daughter.

However, the state governor, Gabriel Suswam, has expressed worry that unless the Fulani militias now converging on the state are dislodged, the economy of the state might be negatively affected, with consequences on the nation at large.

The governor, who was in the State House, Abuja, on Friday to brief President Goodluck Jonathan on the latest havoc done by the herdsmen, stressed the need for the Federal Government to act quickly to stem the constant attacks on farmers and destruction of farms in the state.

He said the attacks were now threatening the economic life of the people of the state and the situation was deteriorating every day.

Suswam warned that other parts of the country could be affected if their activities were not checked.

"Like I did say, the situation in Benue – the crisis between the nomads and farmers – has deteriorated. And I have come to brief the president. Certain actions have been taken by the president to curb the continuation of that crisis, but it is getting very serious, and I'm a bit worried," the governor said.

Dewua said academic activities had been suspended in three out of the 16 wards that make up the local government in the last three years as a result of constant invasion of Fulani mercenaries.

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When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) of the state police command, DSP Dan Ezeala, confirmed the development but said he could not ascertain the number of people killed so far.

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