

Herdsman Kill Four In Renewed Attack In Benue

• Only three people were killed — Police

By Johnson Babajide - M... On Mar 4, 2020

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One of the victim

Suspected herdsman have killed four people in a renewed attack in Kwande local government area of Benue State.

A resident of the locality who identified himself as Donald said the suspected herdsman stormed Waya community near Jato Aka in Kwande, shot sporadically and injured many people.

According to Donald, “some herdsman yesterday (Tuesday) stormed our community (Waya) in their numbers and shot sporadically and moved straight to the river shooting as they were forcing residents to flee the community.

“But by the time the dust settled, four people, two men and two women were shot dead while many people were injured.”

Confirming the incident, a member of the House of Representatives representing Kwande/Ushongo federal constituency, Hon. Bob Tyough, said that herdsman had consistently attacked communities in the local government area.

In a statement he issued on Tuesday, a copy of which was made available to our correspondent, he lamented that only 35 policemen were in the whole local government, the number, he said was insignificant to curtail the activities of herdsman in the council.



Residents fleeing the community on a motorcycle

The lawmaker who, though, commended the Operation Whirl Stroke said that he objected to the assertion given by its commander, General Adeyemi Yekini, that peace had returned to Benue State.

He said, “while not taking anything away from the commitment and gallantry of the military in our state, particularly troops of OPWS, I wish to raise objection to the swooping claim by Major General Yekini which tends to sell the impression that total peace has returned to Benue State and our people are no longer under attacks.

“As the member representing Kwande/Ushongo Federal Constituency, I can authoritatively say that my people are still being attacked on a daily basis by herdsman militia. Just yesterday, four persons were killed and many others injured at Waya community in Jato-Aka, Kwande Local Government Area.

“Kwande Local Government Area has only 35 police personnel. How would 35 policemen guarantee the safety of lives and property in a whole local government area?” Tyough asked.

Also confirming the attack, the state police command said that three people including a man and two women were killed by the marauding herdsman.

The Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Catherine Anene, said: “Unknown gunmen suspected to be herders invaded Moon district, Kwande Local Government Area and shot sporadically at persons seated at the river bank.

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“During the investigation, one male and two female corpses were recovered. More police teams have been deployed to the area to restore peace and order while the investigation is still in progress.”

In the same vein, a member representing Makurdi/Guma federal constituency, Hon Benjamin Mzonde, regretted that his constituency had been under heavy attack in the past few weeks.

According to him, “Makurdi/Guma has suffered the worst of the unprovoked attacks in recent times. Less than one week ago, two communities known as Tse-Keleke and New City both in Guma came under fierce herdsman attacks leaving many injured and thousands displaced. Armed herders have been invading my people’s farms with their animals in spite of the military presence in the area.



Another victim

“The other day, hundreds of cows accompanied by armed herders invaded the campus of Joseph Tarka University Makurdi formerly known as the University of Agriculture and they were grazing openly causing fear among the students and staff of the institution.

“No security operative was in sight to question the herders on why they carried such weapons. This is the source of worry of the people of my constituency. As their representative, it is my duty to project their fears and concerns.

“It is true that Operation Whirl Stroke has done well to curtail some of the attacks but there is also the need for the Federal Government to beef up the operation. This is what Governor Ortom said in the interview which drew the harsh response from the military commander.

“The fact remains that security outfits including Operation Whirl Stroke need our support to succeed. They alone cannot overcome the menace of insecurity. There is also the need for security agencies to consider any genuine form of support from all stakeholders as important,” Mzondu said.