

• L-R: Kenya President, Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta; Chairperson, African Union Peace and Security Council, Mr. Idris Deby; and President Goodluck Jonathan, at the AU peace and security summit in Nairobi, Kenya... on Tuesday. Photo: NAN.

110 killed in Taraba, Nasarawa attacks

Jude Owuamanam and Umar Muhammed

NO fewer than 110 people lost their lives on Tuesday to fresh crises in Nasarawa and Taraba states.

Sixty were killed in Agbolagu, Kampani and Fadama-Bona Eggon in Nasarawa-Eggon Local Government Area of Nasarawa State by suspected Fulani cattle rustlers. The remaining 50 died in the hands of gunmen in Wukari, Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba state.

Houses and property worth millions of naira were also torched by the cattle breeders during their attacks on the three Nasarawa communities.

It was learnt that the attacks happened while the security summit summoned by Governor Umaru Tanko Al-Makura to discuss the way out of crisis between the Eggon, Fulani herdsmen and Alago people was ongoing at the Government House in Lafia.

It was also gathered that those caught up in the crossfire were mostly the aged and little children. Some were said to have escaped with bullet wounds.

The attacks were said to have caught the inhabitants of the villages unaware as majority of them were at home after early morning farming.

The Public Relations Officer of the state Police Command, Ismaila Numan, said that

information at his disposal was still sketchy.

The National President of Eggon Cultural and Development Association, Christopher Mamman, who confirmed the casualty figure, alleged that the herdsmen were camped in Wamba from where they attacked the three communities.

He said, "They (Fulani herdsmen) were mercenaries camped in Wamba. They came this(Tuesday) morning and attacked our people. They came through Wamba and went back through there."

Our correspondent in Taraba gathered that the 50 people killed in Wukari were among going for the subhi (early morning prayer) when men dressed in military uniform struck.

The attackers were said to have also injured many others and set ablaze a brewery depot behind the palace of the Wukari monarch.

Although the Police and the Red Cross in the state could not give the casualty figure, a resident of the town said "about 50 people were killed by the attackers who dressed like military men."

The resident, who claimed to be a member of the town's vigilance group, added that many others were also injured during the incident.

The President of the Youths of Vision Wukari, Mr. Tsa-asen Agbu, who said they rose up in response to the attack, lamented that in the ensuing pandemonium, many

were shot dead by the attackers.

"At about 5am on Tuesday unknown persons stormed the town and burnt down the brewery behind the palace of Aku-uka," Agbu told journalists.

"They overpowered the security agents guarding the town," he added, expressing sadness that "Wukari has again been enmeshed in another round of crisis."

He blamed the fresh attack on "some politicians in the state whom, he claimed, were bent on destabilising the state."

He said that such politicians "want the crisis to continue so that there would be more security votes for them to siphon."

A member representing Wukari 11 in the state House of Assembly, Mr. Daniel Gani, confirmed the incident, saying there were few security personnel on ground to confront the gunmen.

He called on acting Governor Garba Umar to order the deployment of more security operatives in the town.

Gani said he could not give the casualty figure because gunshots were still being heard.

The Secretary of the Red Cross, Lucky Agema, also told newsmen that "at about 5am today(Tuesday), we woke up and discovered there was shooting all over the town, but didn't know who was responsible."

CODE OF ETHICS

We are guided by the principles of factual, balanced and fair reporting and commentaries.

We believe that these principles and ethical conduct are the basis

of public trust and confidence.

- We believe that a system of self regulation, through a professional code of ethics under an independent body

would best serve the interest of the profession and society.

- We subscribe to the Ombudsman mechanism established by the Newspaper Proprietors'

Association of Nigeria, supported by other stakeholders, to mediate complaints against the press on ethical conduct and recommend redress.

For more information, please contact:
Office of the Ombudsman,
Newspaper Proprietors' Association of Nigeria
8, Maryland Crescent,
Maryland, Ikeja. Or e-mail:
ngrombudsman@yahoo.com