

Again, suspected herdsmen kill 13 in Benue

June 23, 2016



Peul (Fulani) herdsmen from Macina cross the Niger river with their cattle. This event, crossing the waters, recalls two myths: the ancestors of the Peul's journey from India, during which they crossed the Red Sea to reach Africa, and the origin of the cow which, according to an African myth, sprang from the water. A very important ritual which, not by chance, coincides with Mali's national day (21.10).

Attah Ede, Makurdi

THREE days after Governor Samuel Ortom met with stakeholders from Katsina-Ala, Ukum and Logo local government areas to deliberate on ways to tackle the incessant Fulani attacks, unknown gunmen suspected to be Fulani herdsmen in the early hours of Wednesday raided four villages and killed 13 persons in two local government areas of Logo and Ukum in the state.

According to our correspondent, this is the third attack between last Saturday and Sunday this week, where 59 persons were killed in the area.

The Benue State Police Command's Public Relations Officer, ASP Moses Yamu, confirmed that four people were killed in the Vaase community of Ukum while three corpses were recovered in

Anyiin and one in Uzer in Logo LGA of the state. He said additionally five corpses were recovered from Tsukwa.

Yamu said the attacks were carried out simultaneously at 2am by the suspected herdsmen.

However, a source told our correspondent that death tolls were over 18 at the time of this report, but the police could not confirm the claims as they were still going round.

Speaking on the new development, former Senior Special Assistant on Media to the former governor, Gabriel Suswam, who hails from Anyiin, Chief Joseph Anawah, said that the five persons were first shot dead at Tsukwa settlement before the security operatives came to the scene.

He maintained that the attackers however continued shooting in some places, saying that he saw two corpses recovered at Anyiin, while several others injured were receiving treatment at NKST Hospital at Anyiin.

But another eyewitness, however, said three corpses had so far been recovered at the scene of the attacks from Anyiin axis, while several others with machete cuts and gunshot wounds were receiving treatment at the NKST Hospital, Anyiin.

The source added that another corpse was discovered at Uzer Tombo Ward and Government Settlement while several casualties were recorded at Gbeji and Vaase in Ukum LG attacks.

“Several other people are still missing. This is a well coordinated attack. The attackers came from Awe axis of Nasarawa State, through the River Benue, and successfully launched their attacks on Benue communities. The operations at Anyiin, Uzer, Jootar, Government Settlement and Vaase took place simultaneously. It was indeed a coordinated attack.

“A day to Wednesday’s attack, the herdsmen shot and killed Mr. Samuel Ormbagwen, in his farm at Anawah settlement area, near Anyiin. His corpse was discovered the next day with his farm implements. This, as far as I know, has gone out of hand because nobody is safe in that community,” he said.

In his reaction, the State Coordinator of Myetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria, Garus

Gololo, who had earlier blamed the incessant crisis on continuing reprisal from the two warring factions, said the inability of the former governor Suswam to settle the herdsmen was responsible for presenting frequent crises.

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