

John Charles, Makurdi

No fewer than 10 persons have been reportedly killed following a two-day attack by Fulani herdsmen on several villages in the Kwande Local Government Area of Benue State.

The attack is coming about three weeks after 20 persons were killed during an attack on Buruku communities by Fulani herdsmen.

The latest attack in Kwande communities was said to have started on Sunday morning and lasted till the early hours of Monday.

According to sources, the communities attacked included Ikoyawen in the Moon District, and Alaba Village of the Nzaav Council ward, both in the Turan area of Kwande Local Government.

Some villages in the Moon District had been under occupation by suspected herdsmen since the last two years.

It was gathered that the marauders first invaded Ikoyawen in the Moor District early Sunday morning and killed four persons, before moving to the Nzaav District on Monday where four persons were reportedly killed.

A source, who spoke to our correspondent on the telephone, said, “The attack was unprovoked, the herders just invaded our community, Ikoyawen, early Sunday morning, shot sporadically which made people to flee the village.”

When asked if there was any casualty, the local source, who pleaded not to be named, said, “I learnt that four persons were killed; it was after the attack on our village that they moved to the nearby community, Nzaav, where I learnt that six other persons were killed.”

The local source explained that the areas had been deserted as a result of the attack, adding that the villagers had moved to Jato Aka and Adikpo, the headquarters of the council area to take refuge.

The source added that several persons were still missing as of the time of filing this report.

When contacted, the Benue State coordinator, Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria, Garus Gololo, however, denied that Fulani herdsmen attacked Kwande communities.

Rather, Gololo said some criminals in the council area rustled 300 cows that belonged to herdsmen.

“I am not aware of Fulani attack in Kwande but what I know is that last week some criminal elements in the Turan area of Kwande rustled 300 cattle that belong to herders.

“There are no Fulanis in Turan; they have all moved to Kashimbila (Kashimbila is a border town between Benue and Taraba states).”

Earlier, the Benue State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Bahir Makama, said that some criminals in Kwande were arrested for rustling 150 cows.

The police spokesman in the state, Moses Yamu, confirmed the attack on Kwande communities in a statement he sent to newsmen, but said only two persons were killed.

Yamu said, “We had information that Alaba and Manda Ordue communities in the Yaav council ward of the Kwande Local Government Area of Benue State were under attack by suspected herdsmen.

“Mobile policemen have been deployed in the area to arrest the situation as two persons namely: Keemo Anumen, 65 years old and Tanveshima Dabo, 45 years old, have so far been confirmed dead.”