

28 killed in fresh suspected herdsmen attacks on Benue, Nasarawa communities

JOHN CHARLES AND COLLINS SUNDAY

TWENTY-eight persons have been reportedly killed in attacks on several communities in Benue and Nasarawa states by suspected herdsmen.

A former Speaker of the Benue State Assembly, Dave Iorhemba, on Saturday said 17 people were killed in separate attacks on communities in the Guma Local Government Area of the state.

Speaking with journalists, Iorhemba explained that several people were injured and receiving treatment in various hospitals in the state. He noted that communities such as Ayeri and Tse-Gboigvo in Mbaye/Yandev Ward, Guma, suffered deadly attacks between 1am and 2am on Saturday.

The former speaker added that a primary school teacher, Hycint Ajum, at Isherev in the local government was massacred last Wednesday.

He said, "In the last couple of weeks, there has been a series of attacks in some particular areas like Tse-Ukor where scores were killed and at Tse-Gborigvo where seven people were killed and several others injured and taken to the hospital for treatment. What is most disturbing was the recent attack that happened at Tse-Uhembe in which a Fulani herdsmen inflicted machete cuts on a farmer who also retaliated by cutting him (the herdsman). Both of them were brought to a military checkpoint."

On the exact number of casualties recorded between Friday and Saturday, the ex-Speaker said, "Now the number of persons we have counted is up to 17 and some are badly injured and are receiving treatment in the hospital."

The former speaker however commended troops of OPWS, appealing to the authorities to ensure that they (troops) do not stay long in a particular area.

He added, "When they continue to stay in one place, they become used to the people and they certainly cannot act in the way and manner they should. I would suggest that the Federal Government redeploy them to other points."

Iorhemba also commended the state governor, Samuel Ortom, who he said assisted in the payment of the medical bills of those injured.



•Sule

Efforts to get the reaction of the Benue State Police Command were not successful as its spokesperson, DSP Catherine Anene, did not pick up her calls when our correspondent called her.

In the Nasarawa incident, "11 people were killed" in the early hours of Saturday by suspected herdsmen who launched an attack on Ajimaka community, a



•Ortom

Tiv settlement in the Doma Local Government Area of the state.

President of Tiv Development Association in the state, Peter Ahemba, gave the figure in an interview with one of our correspondents.

Ahemba said the attacks on Tiv people of the state, particularly those living at the border areas between

Benue and Nasarawa states had become frequent despite efforts by the Nasarawa State Governor, Abdullahi Sule, and his Benue counterpart, Ortom, to ensure lasting peace.

He said, "Each time the herdsmen have issues relating to implementation of the anti-open grazing law by the Benue State Government, they turn back to attack our Tiv people in Nasarawa State. We are Tivs in Nasarawa state. We are peace-loving people. The herdsmen must stop attacking our people for things we know nothing about."

He further said that the continuous attacks on Tiv people had led to the displacement of over 10,000 Tiv farmers in Doma and Keana local government areas of the state.

Ahemba appealed to the federal and state governments to direct the deployment of security operatives in the area to avoid the breakdown of law and order. He urged the Tiv people in the state to remain calm and avoid taking the law into their own hands.

The affected victims according to an eye witness account are women and children while others scammed for safety in the village and called for help from the neighbouring villages.

The state Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Ramhan Nansel, said he had received calls concerning the incident, adding that the command had yet to receive an official report. He said, "The command has yet to receive an official report on the incident but immediately we get the report, something will be said about it."

Ogun community gets transformer after eight-month outage

DAUD OLATUNJI

THE Owode-Egba community in the Obafemi-Owode Local Government Area of Ogun State has received a new transformer after an eight-month outage.

The management of Ibadan Electricity Distribution Company on Saturday commissioned a new 2.5 MVA, 33KV/11KV transformer in the

community valued at N21m.

Youths in the community, under the auspices of Owode-Egba Youths Development Movement, in January protested against the development. They lamented that efforts to ensure that the IBEDC replaced a burnt transformer were futile.

The community youth leader, Abdul-Fatai Soyoye, described the development as the beginning

of a new dawn in the area.

He added that the eight months of blackout would finally come to an end. Soyoye said, "Since August 9 last year Owode Egba hasn't had electricity. But today we are appreciating everybody including the IBEDC, kabiyesi and other well-meaning people. Everybody put effort together including youths to achieve this. We are thanking Almighty God that this new one should be a new beginning in Owode-Egba."

In his remarks, the Chief Technical Officer of the

ASD killed three and injured in Adomawa mob attack. Police