

18 killed in attacks on Benue, Zamfara communities, NSCDC outpost

JOHN CHARLES, MAIHARAJI
ALTINE AND TONY OKAFOR

SUSPECTED Fulani herdsmen on Friday night invaded Tse Ancha, Agan community, in the Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State and reportedly murdered eight people.

Tse Ancha is about a kilometre to an internally-displaced persons' camp in Abegana, where seven people were killed by the suspected herdsmen about three weeks ago.

The invasion and gruesome murder of the eight people including the head of the community came barely 12 hours after the victims of the Abegana IDP camp were buried.

The casualties, according to a source in the community would have been more but for the prompt response of some youths who were at a wake in a nearby village and raced to the scene.

The council Chairman, Anthony Dyegeh, who confirmed the attack to our correspondent on the phone on Saturday, said the suspected herders could have wiped out Tse Ancha and proceeded to neighbouring villages but for the swift response from the youths.

Dyegeh said, "They (suspected herdsmen) operated in a commando fashion and in about 10 minutes, they disappeared. Eight people were killed and five injured. Among those killed was the kindred head of the village. He was among the people who accompanied me to the burial of seven people killed at Abagana IDP camp. We parted around 9pm yesterday (Friday) only for him to be killed at five minutes to midnight alongside others."

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, DSP Catherine Anene, in a terse message confirmed the attack.

She simply said, "Agan incident confirmed."

In Zamfara State, bandits reportedly shot dead eight farmers in their farmlands in Damaga village of Maradun Local Government Area of the state on Saturday.

A farmer, Mohammed Sani, who narrowly escaped death, told Sunday PUNCH on the phone that the bandits invaded the farmlands around 9am when the farmers were busy clearing their farms preparatory to a new farming season.

He said, "The bandits, who were on motorcycles, invaded our farms around 9am and began to shoot people they met on the farmland. They were able to kill eight people and wounded many, while others ran helter-skelter for their lives."

The spokesperson for the police in the state, SP Mohammed Shehu,

said the command had commenced investigation on the incident.

Shehu said, "I will get back to you as soon as we finish our investigation."

In Anambra, gunmen killed two officers of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps while their rifles were taken away and their operational vehicle set ablaze.

The NSCDC Public Relations Officer in the state, Okadigbo Edwin, said the incident happened in Nneyi, Umueri in the Anambra East Local Government Area of the state during a gun duel.

He said, "Some yet-to-be identified hoodlums attacked the civil defence outpost in Nneyi, Umueri, shooting indiscriminately."

Northern youths blame insecurity on Jonathan's failure to honour one-term agreement

HINDI LIVINUS

The Northern Youth Leaders Forum has blamed the pervading insecurity in the country on former President Goodluck Jonathan.

The NLYF, a coalition of northern socio-political groups, argued that the country would have been spared the current security challenges if Jonathan had respected the agreement he reached with northern state governors and leaders of thought to only serve one term, following the death of the late President Musa Yar'Adua.

The NLYF Chairman, Elliot Afiyo, said this while speaking with journalists in Yola on Saturday.

Afiyo said though the coalition had been championing rotational presidency, it had now changed its mind as the country needed to look beyond the regions to get a President capable of dealing with the current security challenges.

According to him, a "coalition or cabal is behind the current security situation being faced by the country."

The NLYF chairman said, "With what is going on in this country, we need to bring anybody from anywhere in this country to deal with the situation."

"If you flash back to the Jonathan regime, you will observe that Jonathan was ready and willing to deal with the security situation, but some people, especially from the North (undermined him) – we have evidence. A coalition or cabal benefitting from the insecurity is causing the insecurity in this country. And you need somebody with a lion heart to deal with it. That is why we threw the presidency open."

He added, "If Jonathan had agreed on that one term, we wouldn't have been having all these insecurity (challenges) that we are having."

Imo elders protest against encroachment by ELITO