

Herders kill 20 in fresh Benue attack, LG chair laments

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It was a black Thursday in Benue State as suspected herders renewed their onslaught on communities in two local government areas of the state.

Sources disclosed that the herders at separate times on Thursday attacked Waya in Jato Aka and Mbapa as well as Ikyande communities in Kwande and Gwer West Local Government Areas of the state respectively.

Scores were reportedly killed but so far, eight corpses were said to have been recovered at Waya in Jato Aka in Kwande local government area and 12 corpses recovered from Mbapa and Ikyande in Gwer West council as of 3:30 pm on Friday.

While the marauding herders invaded Waya around 11:00am on Thursday when the people were in their farm, the killer herders were said to have invaded Mbapa and Ikyande communities at about 4:30 pm the same day and murdered several persons.

At Waya in Kwande, the marauding herders were said to have ambushed their victims on their farms and unleashed terror on them and killed many of them while they also kidnapped several persons.

Those killed included a family of five, an eyewitness said.

A native, who simply identified himself as Terhemien, said, "The herdsmen invaded the Waya community in Jato Aka at about 11am when the victims were on their farms and the herders moved from one farm to another, killing people.

"A family of five was wiped out completely, including one-year-old and three-year-old kids. As I speak, many people are still missing."

Another native, Akerigba, who spoke with *Saturday PUNCH* on the phone, said eight bodies had so far been recovered.

He identified the names of

recovered bodies that were severely mutilated to include Gbaeren Orsoo, Terdoo Tsega, Bemdoo Tsega, Abacha Tsega, Terkaa Tsega, Aõdoaseer Tyov, Iorhen Atim and Aõdowase Igba.

Chairman of Kwande Local Government Area, Tartor Chianson, who confirmed the killing, said eight corpses had been recovered and taken to the morgue at Jato -Aka.

She said the local government had for a long time been facing attacks by suspected herders, adding that in the past three months, no fewer than 50 people had been killed.

Chianson stated, "My people went to their farm on Thursday because it rained on Wednesday night. So, they went to their farm to prepare the land for planting and they were ambushed and killed on their farms at Waya community close to Anwase.

"The herdsmen came a few days ago and set a lot of houses ablaze. They also kidnapped some other persons, took away their motorcycles and later brought their mutilated bodies and dumped them.

"All they are doing is just to collect our ancestral homes. As I speak with you, five council wards; Mbachura, Kumakwagh, Yaav, Moon and Mbaikyur, are under siege. Over 50 persons have lost their lives in the area in the last three months.

"So far, we have recovered eight bodies, but the fear of being attacked by the herdsmen who are still in the area has not made it possible for us to go farther to see if we can recover more corpses. The corpses have been deposited at the morgue in Jato-Aka."

In Gwer West, a native who identified herself as Mrs Tsegba, said, "The suspected Fulani herders Thursday evening attacked two of our communities of Ikyande and Mbapa in Gwer West LGA of Benue State.

"As I speak to you (Friday evening), 12 corpses have been recovered from

the two villages and names of some of the corpses are Torhile Jir, Akura JoJo, Simon Shenge, Shenge's child, two of Nyitamen children, whose names have yet to be confirmed."

The Gwer West Chairman, Mrs Grace Igbabon, who confirmed the attack on the two communities declined to give the figure of casualties.

She said, "We have dispatched some policemen to go and ascertain the exact number of people involved. You know the communities are interior villages and the roads are not good.

"Vehicles cannot go there. So, the DPO sent his men on motorcycles to go and confirm the actual number of people killed. The killing happened in Mbapa and Ikyande at about 4:30 pm yesterday (Thursday).

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Catherine Anene, said she had yet to receive any report from the two council areas.

"I have yet to receive any report from the two local government areas about the attack. At times, it takes a little time before we get information because of the

terrain. Those communities are in the interior," Anene said.

Killing too many, Buhari should resign, says Tiv leader

Meanwhile, the President General of Midzough U Tiv, the apex socio-cultural group in Tivland, Iorbee Ihagh, also confirmed the killing and said eight corpses were recovered.

Ihagh, a retired Comptroller of Prison, who hails from Kwande LGA, however called on the President, Major General Muhammad Buhari (retd.), to resign from office since he could not handle the security problem.

Ihagh said, "President Buhari is the one allowing these people (herders) to do all these things because he never said anything about it. He doesn't deserve to be our President. You cannot be the President and watch your citizens being killed everyday.

"The President has never condemned the Miyetti Allah; it means they are doing his bidding. If he had wanted the killing to stop, it would have stopped."

Only God can save Nigeria, says Methodist Prelate

The Prelate, Methodist Church of Nigeria, His Eminence, Samuel Kanu, on Friday said only God could save the country at this time.

Speaking at the 60th Synod of the Ibadan Diocese of the church, Kanu also called on members of the church that are of voting age to get their Permanent Voter Card.

The *News Agency of Nigeria* reported that the synod had as its theme 'Preparing for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (Rev. 22: 12)'.

The Prelate, represented by the Synod Secretary, Very Revd Davidson Aluko, called on all faithful not to sell their votes during

elections to enable the country to enthrone righteous administration.

He said, "In this way, we will help enthrone an administration that will usher in adequate security and economic buoyancy, which will enable us to enjoy the full dividends of democracy.

"We need more men and women with the heart of sincerity, while citizens are enjoined to pray for good people that will occupy leadership positions in all sectors.

"Only God can save Nigeria during this time and give us leaders who will always be sincere to the plights of the citizens.

"Hebrews 11 to 12 encourage us to focus on Jesus Christ, as we equally learn from the experiences of our