

Ex-gov fumes as death toll rises in Benue attacks

John Charles, Makurdi

THE death toll from the reprisal by suspected herders on Gbeji in the Ukum Local Government Area of Benue State has hit 36.

Several people were said to still be missing as of Friday.

The herders in the early hours of Wednesday invaded Gbeji community and shot indiscriminately, killing 18 people including a policeman.

The state Commissioner of Police, Wale Abass, said that the invasion of the herders was likely to be a reprisal since five herders were reported to have been killed by locals in different communities in Logo on Tuesday.

He had said, "Two Fulani were coming from Taraba and were on Keke Napep (motorcycle) after the border line, they (locals) stopped them. They were attacked and killed. Simultaneously, close to Anyiin in the Logo Local Government Area another two Fulani were attacked and killed.

"Also at another village, one of the herders rearing cows was attacked and killed and thereafter (locals) rustled his cows, butchered and shared them.

"When this happened and we got wind of it, we are planning to meet and placate the Fulani through their leader, Miyeitti Allah, to avoid any reprisal unknown to us that they had their plan."

During his visit to Gbeji on Friday, ex-governor of the state, who is now a senator representing the North-East senatorial district, Gabriel Suswam, decried the killings in Gbeji.

Suswam, who decried the killings, said the President had further demonstrated ineptitude and lackadaisical attitude in protecting the lives of the people.

He said, "The incessant killings are highly unacceptable and unfortunate. The Federal

Government has gone to sleep and do not care about the security of the people."

The state governor, Samuel Ortom, represented by the Secretary to the State Government, Prof. Anthony Ijohor, reiterated the call on the Federal Government to arm the state security outfit with AK47 to effectively protect the people. He added that the state government was compiling the number of displaced persons for adequate assistance.

Kidnapped poly lecturer released in Nasarawa, say police

Daniel Ayantoye

The Nasarawa Police Command on Friday said the abducted lecturer of Isa Mustapha Agwai Polytechnic, Lafia, Mr Shammah Yakubu, has been released.

Yakubu, who is also the institution's director of Consultancy Unit, was reportedly abducted by gunmen on Tuesday at 8pm on the way home from work.

The state police spokesperson, Rahman Nansel, who confirmed the report to *City Round* said the victim was released around 6pm on Thursday.

He also said no ransom was paid to secure his release.

"Yes he was released yesterday (Thursday) around 6pm. I know no ransom was paid," He said

A source in the institution who spoke on condition of anonymity for security reasons, told our correspondent that Yakubu was taken to the hospital immediately after his release. He said, "He was released yesterday (Thursday) night and he has been taken to the hospital for medical treatment. He is currently receiving medical attention."