

the opening of Radisson Blu Hotel, Ikeja, Lagos.

# Herdsman killed, Fayose summons peace meeting

• 'I don't want killing of any ethnic tribe in Ekiti or reprisal'

From **Wole Balogun**,  
Ado Ekiti

**A Fulani herdsman, Babuga Dengi, was on Monday killed in a bush between Irele and Oke Ako in Ikole Local Government Area of Ekiti State by people suspected to have come from Benue.**

There has been tension between the herdsman and farmers from Benue state, particularly the Tivs in Ekiti, over allegation of farm destruction and killing.

Last Thursday in Benue, there was mass burial of 73 victims allegedly killed by Fulani herdsman.

Meanwhile, Governor Ayodele Fayose has warned against killing of anyone, either herdsman or farmers, in the name of any clash relating to grazing in the state.

He said recent steps by his government are aimed at preventing violence between farmers and herders and not to give anybody licence to unlawfully take human life.

The governor spoke yesterday during a meeting with Fulani herdsman of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria, farmers, local hunters, security agencies and representatives of the Tiv community in the state.

Fayose, who warned Fulani herdsman and Tiv farmers against turning Ekiti to a war zone, ordered security agents to investigate and fish out the killer of the cattle rearer.

"I cannot accept anybody to be killed. If anybody kills anyone, I will make sure he is killed by ensuring justice. I am sad about the kill-

ing in Benue, but we don't want brutality in Ekiti.

"I won't accept any killing here; the only thing acceptable here is peace. I, therefore, plead with everybody to cooperate with us.

"I want peace in my state, and everybody living here is from Ekiti, whether you are Fulani, Tiv, Yoruba or anybody. Cow matters cannot cause problem between us. Oke Ako-Irele issue should not be allowed to fester. Cooperate with us and whoever kills would be fished out.

"From information, so far, the deceased died as a result of clash between Fulani herders and some Tiv people; but even at that, we cannot condone lawlessness. We don't want the type of Benue issue here."

A communique read by Fayose at the end of the

meeting summoned leaders of the herdsman, farmers, hunters, council chairmen and traditional rulers from Oke Ako and Irele to an expanded meeting.

The meeting resolved that the people must live in peace and ordered security agencies to fish out the killers of the herdsman in the area.

It also agreed that committee on herdsman should be expanded to include Fulani herders, while urging the committee to be more proactive and report, immediately, to security committee when they see strangers in their communities. "We ask security agencies to do more in intelligence gathering, information and prevention, while we thank them for what they have done so far," he said.

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