

41 killed in Benue, Kano, Nasarawa

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• 4 policemen among the dead • 11 missing

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The fragile security in Benue, Kano and Nasarawa was again shattered, yesterday, as gunmen suspected to be Fulani herdsmen killed no fewer than 41 persons.

Among them were four mobile policemen who were reportedly mowed down in Ayinbe, Logo Local Government Area of Benue State and four suspected herders killed by troops during a gun duel.

Worse hit was Nasarawa where the rampaging gunmen murdered 32 Tiv villagers at different locations across the southern senatorial district in a well coordinated attacks yesterday.

The attackers were said to have carried out the dastardly act on the Tiv villages simultaneously across Awe, Keana, Obi and Doma LGA, leaving 19 others with severe gun and machet injuries.

At the time of filing this report, over 10,000 Tiv villagers were said to have been trapped along the Agwatashi-Jangwa road in Obi LGAs shortly after the marauding herdsmen sacked over 200 villages including Uvirkaa, hometown of Commissioner for Water Resources, Gabriel Akaaka.

Our correspondent who went round some of the affected areas gathered that about 15,000 fleeing Tiv villagers were stranded in streets of Lafia, the state capital.

Already, over 100,000 are taking refuge in different Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), camps at Agwatashi, Alosi, Awe, Adudu, Obi, Keana, Doma, Agyaragu, among other locations.

A visit to the Dalhatu Araf Specialist Hospital (DASH), Lafia where eight victims are currently receiving treatment, also revealed that five bodies were deposited at the hospital mortuary out of which three were later released by the Police for burial.

Confirming the development in Lafia, President of Tiv Youth Organization (Nasarawa State chapter), Peter Ahemba said the entire Tiv villages had been sacked, noting that most of the affected villages were being occupied by the invaders.

"As I speak, nine corpses of our people killed this morning by the Fulani terrorists in Wurji village of Keana LGA have just been recovered and brought to Keana town by the Police.

"Last night, seven of our people were killed in a coordinated attacks with 11 others still missing at Kertyo and Apurugh villages in Obi LGA. Last Saturday, we recorded eight deaths from similar attacks in Kadarko area, four from Alosi axis, one from Agberagba, all in Keana LGA. Another six persons were shot at Imon village and were rushed to Obi General Hospital. One of them later died. This is just few out of deaths we recorded within the last three days as a result of these senseless attacks," he noted.

The Tiv youth leader, who alleged that the gun wielding herdsmen were conveyed in trucks to the state to carry out the inhuman act, said it was now clear that incessant attacks on Tiv people were no longer protests against any enacted law but a calculated attempt to exterminate the Tiv community.

He, therefore, appealed to international community to intervene to save the state and country from the current bloodbath.

The Police Public Relations Officer of the state police command, DSP Kennedy Idirisu, confirmed the attacks but said they were yet to ascertain the number of casualties.