

[HOME](#) / [COVER](#) / [NATIONAL](#) / **44 KILLED IN FRESH BENUE, NASARAWA ATTACKS**


44 killed in fresh Benue, Nasarawa attacks

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...Sultan gives MACBAN ultimatum

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At least, 37 persons were reportedly killed, several others injured and some still missing after suspected herdsmen attacked three council wards in Guma Local Government Areas of Benue State. Seven others were killed in a separate attack in Nasarawa State.

The affected Benue villages are Tse Umenger in Mbadwem Council ward, Mbakpaase in Saghev council ward and Tse-Ali in Mbawaar council ward all of Guma Local Government Area.

When contacted, Commissioner of Police in charge of Benue State, CP Fatai Owoseni said he was yet to get details about the attack.

However, Daily Sun gathered from a source who hails from Umenger that the bandits suspected to be herdsmen numbering over 50 stormed the Umenger village on Tuesday evening, set the entire village on fire and killed about 15 people.

The source said a few hours after the attack on Umenger, another group of armed men numbering over 20 invaded and sacked villages at Tomanyiin-Mbakpaase in Saghev council ward, at about 11:30 pm, and killed three persons.

In the early hours of yesterday, the attackers were said to have stormed Tse-Ali in Mbawaar council ward, killed 19 people and razed many houses and food barns.

Last week Friday, gunmen allegedly in military camouflage raided five villages in Saghev council ward and killed 16 persons.

The attack on Guma villages is coming a few hours after suspected herders stormed Ayaar Mbalom in Gwer East Local Government Area and killed 19 persons, among them two Catholic priests.

In another development, gunmen suspected to be Fulani herdsmen killed seven Tiv farmers in Ihuman village, Awe Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

It was gathered that the victims, who had been taking refuge at Kange town as a result of their earlier displacement in the serial attacks on Tiv communities in the southern part of the state, had gone to carry some food items in their homes when the attackers emerged from the bush and opened fire on them.

President of Tiv Youth Organization, Peter Ahemba confirmed the incident in a telephone interview.

But, Police Public Relations Officer of the Nasarawa State command, DSP John Kennedy said he had not been briefed about the attack at press time.

However, the Sultan of Sokoto, Mohammadu Sa'ad Abubakar III has given the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeder Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) two months to fish out criminal elements among herdsmen in the country.

National President of MACBAN, Alhaji Mohammadu Kiruwa made the disclosure during a stakeholders meeting between the farmers and herdsmen held at the instance of the Edo State Police Command to foster peace in the various communities in the state.

National Secretary, Alhaji Baba Othman Ngelzarma who spoke, said they were duty-bound to proffer lasting solution to the incessant herdsmen attacks on innocent citizens of the country.

"If those things that have been alleged have been done by the herdsmen we must do all we could to fish out the criminal elements. He has given us the mandate and in two months time, he wants us to give him results," MACBAN leader said.

Kiruwa said they were in Edo State to sensitise the herdsmen on how to avoid conflict and live peacefully with their host communities.

"We came in respect of what is happening across the states. We have talked with our members and have also heard from them. We also taught them how we want them to behave because they are at the receiving end when trouble starts, because they move with all they