

Herdsman attack Benue community, kill 3

From **Scholastica Onyeka**, Makurdi

GUNMEN suspected to be killer herdsman have reportedly killed three people in cold blood, in a fresh attack on Adaka community of Benue State.

Adaka is a settlement about 20 kilometres on the outskirts of Makurdi Local Government Area and, also, Benue State capital. The incident happened on Saturday.

A resident of the community, Iorkohol Unande, a survivor of the dastardly incident, said the attack was unprovoked. He said the attackers shot sporadically, injuring several people in the community, while three dead bodies were recovered by the time the killer herdsman retreated unchallenged. He said the three people killed by the attackers were all men who were shot at and their bodies butchered by the assailants.

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Benue State Police Command, Catherine Anene, confirmed the incident. She, however, said she had no details yet at the time of filing this report.

Also confirming the incident to newsmen yesterday, Special Adviser to Governor

Samuel Ortom on Security Matters, Lt. Col. Paul Hemba, said: "On Friday, Adaka community reported that one of their sons went out with two others who came to rent a piece of land to farm rice, but never came back up till the evening of that day.

"The community raised the alarm, they alerted me. I got in touch with security personnel patrolling the area, this includes the police and military.

But they said they did not have information on any missing persons.

"I was informed of the development in the night, so we waited until Saturday morning, and sent out patrols, including members of the community; and in the course of the patrol we discovered the dead bodies of the missing three people brutally killed, obviously with machete."

He added: "The commu-

nity is suspecting that herdsman murdered the victims. This is because the herdsman have been operating in their vicinity. Additionally, just last week, the herdsman alleged that some of their cows, which invaded the peoples rice farms, were killed in that community."

Hemba said the Commissioner of Police, Wale Abass, is investigating the case.

Benue State has been un-

der incessant brutal attacks by invading Fulani herdsman, and the renewed killings are coming barely two months after similar separate attacks took place in Gbeji and Ukol communities in Ukum and Guma Local Government Areas of the state, where at least 60 people, including two security personnel, were massacred.

(Continued on www.sunnewsonline.com)

Assassination attempt on senator: 3 soldiers, 2 policemen declared wanted

• 5 others remanded in prison

From **John Adams**, Minna

THE Niger State Police command has launched a manhunt for three soldiers and two police officers, including an Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), indicted in connection with the assassination attempt on the Senator representing Niger East Senatorial District, Senator Mohammed Sani Musa.

The State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department (SCIID) of the Force made the disclosure last Friday, while arraigning five other

suspects arrested in connection with the incident at the Chief Magistrate's Court one in Minna.

Some gunmen suspected to be assassins, two weeks ago, invaded the Minna residence of the Senator, at about 8pm, disguised as whistleblowers who had come to search the senator's house for alleged stockpiled arms and some foreign currency.

Four of the suspects, Felix Clarkson, Oladele Peter Akano, Abdul Salisu and Inspector Babagana Alhaji, were promptly arrested at the scene when a political ally of the

senator alerted the police. The suspected gang leader, Sheriff Jimbarima, was later arrested by the police intelligence department after a manhunt.

The First Information Report (FIR) by the police indicated that the three army officers, said to be from the 31 Artillery Brigade Minna, including CPL Mohammed J., are now at large.

The soldiers were said to be fully armed with AK 47 rifles and had provided security cover during the aborted assassination/kidnapping attempt of the senator.

Police investigation, according to the FIR, also indicated that two of the suspects nabbed at the senator's

house in Minna, Oladele Peter Akano and Sheriff Jimbarima, presented themselves as army personnel and staff from office of the National Security Adviser office Abuja, to enable them gain access to the residence.

The five suspects arraigned in court are Felix Clarkson, Oladele Peter Akano, Abdul Salisu, Inspector Babagana Alhaji and Sheriff Jimbarima.

They are standing trial on six count charges of criminal conspiracy, attempt to commit an offence, to wit, kidnapping, attempt to commit an offence, wit, armed robbery, criminal trespass, personating a public servant and mischief to property.

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