

Benue: Five farmers murdered after Osinbajo's visit



By **Cephas Iorhemen**



Again, gunmen believed to be herdsmen yesterday murdered five farmers in Logo Local Government Area of Benue State. Scores of other people were still missing in the attack that came a few hours after Vice President Yemi Osinbajo left the place.

deadly attacks and interact with the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

Logo was one of the local government areas the Vice-President visited. While there he given the IDPs hope of returning to their ancestral homes to continue with normal farm activities. But the killers invaded the local government area when farmers were on the farms and burnt down many houses.

The attack has forced hordes of the inhabitants to flee their homes. A community leader, Chief Joseph Anawa, said the invaders made incursion into the area between 6:00 and 9a.m. and launched the attack on Ukemberagya community and Gaambe-Tiev. He said, "So far, three dead bodies have been recovered.

Those killed are Bem Torjem, Apedzan Chia and Akpuku Koya. Many others are still missing. "I am speaking with you." Anawa said five villages – Tse- Mue, Torkaa, Mgbakpa, Torje and Ife – were worse hit.

The local government Chairman, Mr. Richard Nyajo, confirmed the killings and said he reported the matter to the police and Governor Samuel Ortom.

The state Commissioner of Police, Fatai Owoseni, also confirmed the killing of three people in the area. "While we were having a Security Council meeting, we got a report that there was an attack on Chembe village on Wukari- Anyiin Road which falls within Logo Local Government Area.

"The Police Special Forces have moved to the place and so far, from the report I got that 11 persons were killed and because it's a developing story we will update you when we have more information," Owoseni said. Meanwhile, the killing in Kaduna came days after the Chief of Army Staff, Lt. General Tukur Yusuf Buratai, opened a military operation base in Birnin Gwari Local Government Area of the state.

The attack occurred at Mashigi, Dakwaro, Sabon Gida, and another village near Dakwaro, Kakangi Ward of Birnin Gwari Local Government Area. The state Police Public Relations Officer said.

sent to the area to stem the tide of attacks were also killed by the bandits.

Buratai had given soldiers posted to the area three weeks to root out the bandits from the enclave before the recent attack. The bandits attacked the villages and killed anyone they found, burnt houses, food barns and destroyed others.

It was learnt that so far 10 bodies have been recovered from the villages and surrounding bushes, even as rescue operation is still ongoing. A member of the volunteer group, M. Umar, said so far “10 bodies have been recovered, while many are unaccounted for”.

But the state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Aliyu Mukhtar, said seven persons were killed in the attack in Birnin-Gwari. According to him the attack occurred on Wednesday at 6p.m. Mukhtar also disclosed that the combined team of security operatives comprising police and military was now on the trail of the bandits.

He said the police would do everything possible to apprehend the killers and bring them to justice. Also, the bandits burnt houses and grain stock of the affected villages. According to him, volunteers from the southern axis of Birnin-Gwari and security men have been deployed to the affected communities to ascertain the number of casualties. Also, the member representing Birnin-Gwari/Giwa Federal Constituency in the House of Representatives, Shekarau, had earlier raised a motion on the floor of the House, calling for government intervention over the incessant killings in his constituency.

However, the gunmen struck in the lawmaker's Kakangi Ward a day after his motion. In part, the Birnin Gwari Vanguard for Security and Good Governance, a group of indigenes of Birnin-Gwari both home and in the Diaspora, said in a statement that “the affected villages are in need of aid, such as food, shelter and clothes”.

The group said despite the attacks and kidnappings which had almost become a daily occurrence on Kaduna-Birnin Gwari Road, “we are saluting the Federal Government and security agencies for the deployment of personnel to deal with the situation in Birnin-Gwari.” “We hope more troops and special police task force will be deployed.”