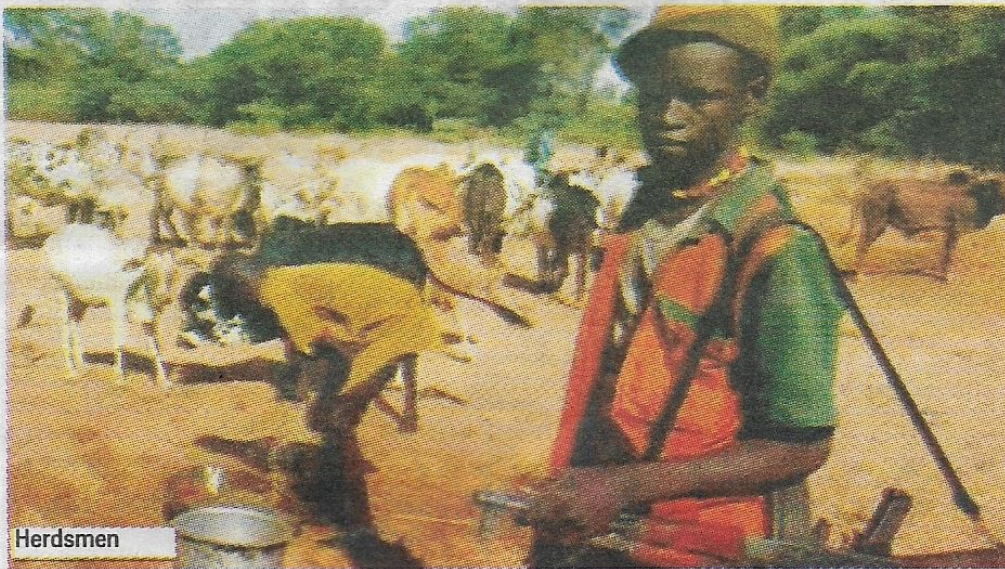


Buhari's visit: Herders kill three in Benue community



Herdersmen

Cephas Iorhemen
MAKURDI

Armed men believed to be of Fulani extraction on Monday killed three farmers at Tomatar in Guma Local Government Area of Benue State.

In the attack, which came ahead of today's

visit by President Muhammadu Buhari, many houses were set ablaze while scores of people were displaced. Several people are also missing.

Residents said the attackers the area in the early hours of the day and were shooting sporadically.

An indigene of Tse-Tseghem, one of the communities worse hit in the attack, Mr. Dennis Mernyi, said he received a telephone call from his people that their village and other

surrounding villages were under severe attack by the insurgents.

Mernyi disclosed that Tse-Tseghem settlement is a coastal community where over 50 people were massacred on New Year day in 2018.

He said: "My brothers who are in the village called me on Tuesday morning that two people were shot dead, three houses burnt and a few other people sustained gunshot injuries during the attack."

"The armed men engaged the Operation Whirl-Stroke (OPWS) of the Nigerian Army stationed in the area in a gun battle that lasted for several hours before they were pushed back to the neighbouring Nasarawa State."

Confirming the invasion, the Force Commander of the Operation Whirl Stroke (OPWS), Major General Adeyemi Yekini, told journalists that the armed mercenaries tried to invade Tomatar in Guma but his troops engaged them in a gun battle and inflicted heavy casualty on them.

Yekini said his troops did not suffer any casualty in the battle.

He assured the people of the state that the OPWS would continue to do its best to ensure the safety of lives and property of all by dislodging all armed criminals anywhere in the state.