

Benue: Herdsmen kill 20 farmers, hunters

Cephas Iorhemen, Ahmed Miringa and Emmanuel Onani

Armed herdsmen yesterday invaded the Ebete Usha Ward in Agatu Local Government Area of Benue State and killed 20 people – 17 farmers and three Jukun hunters.

This also came as suspected Boko Haram members murdered 18 people said to be firewood and charcoal fetchers at Koshebe general area of Jere Local Government Area of Borno State.

The Commander, Operation Whirl-Stroke (OPWS) of the Nigerian Army Major General Adeyemi Yekini, confirmed the Benue killing.

He said the attackers accessed the Agatu community through Loko in neighbouring Nasarawa State. In the attack, which started at 1a.m. when people were deeply asleep, scores of women and children were displaced, while many others were wounded.

Schools, hospitals and other economic and political activities in the area were grounded.

A survivor of the attack, Daddy Seni, whose father was among those killed alongside his siblings, said he left his father at Ebete while heading to Aloko for fishing when he received a phone call from home asking him to turn back, that his father had been shot by Fulani herdsmen.

Seni said on reaching where his father was lying down at a pool of blood, he tried to take him to the hospital, but the man said: "My son, don't bother about me and your siblings again, ours has finished; we can't survive these gunshots, run for your dear life to tell others about this." Then he gave up.

Seni, who narrated the incident to the Agatu Local Government Chairman, Hon. Alhaji Oyigochi, who rushed to Ebete with some executive members of local government and security men, said he hid in the bush and heard the killers speak Fulani language while trying to run from the scene.

He said among those murdered were three Jukun men who were hunting animals, while two others sustained serious gunshot wounds and were rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment.

Reacting to the incident, Oyigochi appealed to government to quickly come to their aid.

The chairman said the attack occurred at a time Nigerians were preparing to elect their new leaders. According to him, if the situation continues, it will disorganise so many things.

Oyigochi said his people had never taken laws into their hands despite provocations from herdsmen whom he said had taken over farmlands in most parts of Agatu land.

The chairman urged his people to remain calm to allow the law enforcement agencies to carry out their

Boko Haram murders 18 firewood sellers in Borno



Some of the victims



duties effectively.

The Commander of OPWS, Major General Yekini, who said he received report of the attack after the assailants had retreated, could not give the casualty figure but said that his men had been deployed in the area on patrol.

He said: "The location, where it happened, although is in Benue State, can better be accessed through Loko in Nasarawa State."

Meanwhile, Governor Samuel Ortom has condemned the attack and killing of innocent Agatu people.

He called on security agencies to move in to forestall further attacks.

The governor, who spoke through his Chief Press Secretary (CPS), Mr. Terver Akase, said: "This is quite unfortunate and condemnable. The government of Benue State condemns this and urges security agencies to mediate and move in to forestall further attacks on innocent people of Benue State; this is because we cannot afford to have another round of

killings that we had in 2018."

Akase said the governor met earlier yesterday with the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Bishi and he confirmed that there was an attack in Ebete in Agatu in which 17 persons were killed by suspected armed herdsmen.

He said: "We feel that this is unfortunate, because the governor had raised the alarm that some persons for political reasons are planning to unleash armed herdsmen on innocent people to create fear in the people for political gains."

Meanwhile, a reliable security source told journalists in Maiduguri that the Boko Haram attack occurred on Monday when the victims had gone to Koshebe area to fetch firewood and charcoal.

Another security operative said 10 bodies were evacuated from the scene to Maiduguri, while the remaining eight bodies were yet to be removed because the area could not be easily accessible.

A member of Civilian JTF from the area said he saw security vehicles convey the bodies on Khadamari-Maiduguri Road about 2p.m. on Tuesday.

He said: "There was an attack by suspected members of Boko Haram terrorists on firewood sellers who had gone to Koshebe general area of Jere Local Government Area of Borno State to fetch their products."

"Eighteen bodies were seen at the scene of the attacks, but as it is, only 10 bodies were recovered and evacuated so far by our security forces in conjunction with members of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF).

"The remaining eight bodies were yet to be evacuated due to inaccessibility of the area."

However, the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) yesterday said a camp, suspected to be operated by Boko Haram Terrorists (BHTs) at Arboko, Borno State, had been destroyed by an Alpha jet.

The Director of Public Relations and Information (DOPRI), Air Commodore Ibikunle Daramola, who made the disclosure in a statement, said many of the suspected fighters were killed during the operation undertaken by the Air Task Force component of Operation Lafiya Dole.

He said: "The Air Task Force (ATF) of Operation Lafiya Dole has decimated a Boko Haram Terrorists (BHT) camp and neutralised some of their fighters at a settlement called Arboko in Borno State."

"The operation was conducted on February 19 while a Nigerian Air Force (NAF) Alpha Jet and an Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) platform were providing close air support to troops of 82 Brigade Nigerian Army"

Two killed as PDP, APC members clash in Kwara

Biodun Oyeleye
ILORIN

At least two people were killed during a clash between supporters of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC) at Ojoku in Oyin Local Government Area of Kwara State.

The police said they had arrested six people in connection with the incident which occurred on Monday evening among followers of the APC senatorial candidate for Kwara South, Lola Ashiru, and his PDP counterpart, Senator Rafifu Ibrahim.

Although both parties exchanged blames over the incident, the state Police



IG, Adamu

his campaign train in Ojoku, Oyin Local Government Area of Kwara State on February 19 in the evening.

"Immediately the report was received,

It was learnt that the exchange of the political slogans, 'O To Ge' for APC and 'O Tun Ya', for PDP led to the mayhem during which dangerous weapons were used.

The PDP listed some of its members allegedly shot during the fracas to include "Dondo, PDP Youth Leader, Agbade, Sheriff, Sai Toyin, Kaba, Akanmu, Tunde Kolo-kolo and Ibrahim Ojoku."

In a statement, PDP state chairman, Alhaji Kola Shittu, claimed that the incident was part of "the plot by the APC to throw Kwara into chaos and bloodletting so that INEC can shift election and later conduct a staggered election in the state."

Meanwhile, the state APC Chairman, Hon. Bashir Bolarinwa, has asked the

Debasina women in videos: 'IG must