

Suspected herdsmen invade Benue village, kill 11 farmers, children

...communities under siege - LG chair

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Herdsmen suspected to be from the Fulani extraction on Thursday made an incursion into Waya, a community at Jato Aka in Kwande Local Government Area of Benue State, killing at least eleven people.

Jato Aka is the hometown of Second Republic Minister of Power and Steel and ex-Chairman of the Northern Elders Forum (NEF), Wantaregh Paul Iyorpoo Unongo.

A family of five, including a one and half-year-old and three-year-old children, were among those

gruesomely killed by the militants.

Sources from the local government told Saturday Telegraph that the terrorists who were armed with sophisticated weapons, took the victims, who were working on their farms, due to the resumption of the rains, unawares as they (the assailants) carried out a coordinated silent killings.

A witness from the area, Mr. Lawrence Akerigba, told our reporter that the herdsmen invaded the now deserted community, went straight to the farms and "were killing people silently from one farm to the other."

Akerigba confirmed the wiping out of a family of five including their

two children, adding that hordes of the people are still missing.

According to him: "When I heard about the attack, I quickly alerted troops of the Operation Whirl-Stroke (OPWS) and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) who swiftly moved to the scene, but when the Fulani terrorists saw them coming, they abandoned their cattle and ran to unknown destinations."

Chairperson of the local government, Mrs. Joyce Tartor Chianson, also confirmed the attack and killings.

Chianson said corpses of those murdered were deposited in the morgue in an unnamed hospital in Jato Aka.

"They were working on their respective farms

when the herdsmen struck and killed them at different farm sites. The killings took place in Waya, a community in Jato Aka, near Anwase in Kwande Local Government Area".

She noted that the local government has never witnessed peace since the beginning of this year, disclosing that at least 50 people had been killed between January and April by the attackers whose aim she maintained; "is to forcefully take over the rich fertile land of the people".

According to her, over five communities in Turan area, including Mbadura, Kumakwagh, Yaav, Moon and Mbaikyor are now under siege as a result of the herders' attacks as inhabitants of those settlements have since fled to Jato Aka where they are currently taking refuge.