

Military Kills Five Killer-herdsmen after Deadly Attack in Benue

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By George Okoh

A deadly attack launched by suspected herdsmen militias on some communities in Benue State has left many unaccounted casualties, even as the troops of a special strike operation codenamed Operation Whirl Stroke (OPWS) killed five of the invaders.

The herdsmen had attacked three separate villages in Guma Local Government Area of the state.

According to a local source, the attackers invaded three villages, including Torkula, Kponko and Kaseyo all in Mbadwem council ward of Guma last Saturday.

The Fulani invaders were said to have stormed the villages and started shooting sporadically in all directions, killing people and injuring others in the process.

The source put the figure of death in the attack at 12, but another resident of the area, Tersoo Philip, said one person died during the attack while two others were injured but later died at the hospital, bringing the total number of death to three.

He said as soon as troops of the OPWS heard about the attack, they swiftly went on the trail of the herdsmen and sighted them in the bush.

"In fact, there was a fierce exchange of gunfire between the troops and the armed herdsmen during which five of the herdsmen were killed with no casualty on the side of the troops," Philips said.

The troops were also said to have recovered three weapons from the attackers.

When contacted, the Force Commander of OPWS, Maj. Gen. Adeyemi Yekini, declined comment on the attack, but referred the journalist to the Defence Headquarters (DHQ) Information Directorate. Also, when contacted, the Benue State Police Command Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Catherine Anene, confirmed the attack but said the Command was yet to ascertain the number of casualties at the time of filing this report. She explained that the intervention of the joint military troops averted further attack in the affected areas.

