

# Five Feared Killed as Herdsmen Attack Edo Community

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Adibe Emenyonu in Benin City

The agrarian community of Odiguetue in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State was in turmoil on Thursday, as armed herdsmen attacked the village, killing at least five people, and leaving several others with various injuries.

It was learnt that the herdsmen, who had about a month ago, attacked security personnel in the locality and set ablaze a patrol van, came back on Thursday morning to unleash mayhem on the locals, who had been resisting an attempt by the herders to feed their cows with their farm produce.

Narrating their ordeal to journalists, a community leaders, Lt. Commander Anthony Ogie (rtd), said: "For some time now, the herdsmen have been harassing us. You can't go to the farm anymore because of them. Last week, around 7pm, they came close to the houses, shooting but when the people came out, they went back to the bush.

"Then on Thursday, people were on their farms when the herdsmen came and killed three people. That was in the morning. Later in the evening, they came again and killed two more but this time on the expressway. There is a police check point on the highway. The police saw them but didn't do anything.

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not go into the bush where these herdsmen have their camps, even when the villagers

volunteer to lead the security men. Odiguetue is a peaceful community. How can you do this to a people who are peaceful and who go about their normal businesses?" Ogie queried.

Also speaking, another community leader, Elder John Osagiede, said that he got the information that the village was going to be attacked and tried to reach the authorities to no avail.

"When I got information that the herdsmen were going to attack Odiguetue, I tried to reach the deputy governor but I couldn't. Then I got in touch with an honourable, who promised to reach the AIG. The herdsmen have been tormenting the villagers. They uproot their cassava and feed the tubers to their cows.

"On Thursday, they (herdsmen) came and killed three people. One of the victims, when they used gun and cutlass on him and it did not work, they rammed stick into his mouth. Later, they went and killed another people. Five people have been killed so far. This is what they have been doing to us for a long time now," Osagiede explained.

Also on his part, a University of Benin retiree, Mr. Joseph Obuele, disclosed that "When the incident happened on Thursday, we informed the police".

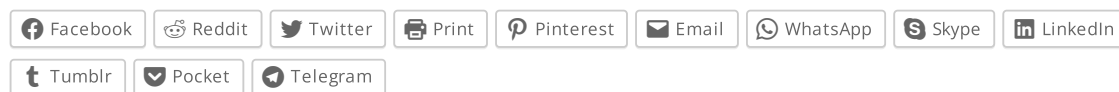
Obueke added: "I left the village yesterday (Friday) and I am on my way back there now (Saturday evening). It was on Thursday that the herdsmen came and killed three people on their farms. Some other casualties were recorded in the neighbouring village – some three kilometres from Odiguetue.

"We informed the police. The police came and they were the ones who took the corpses to the mortuary. For now, there is no security. We are the ones keeping vigilance to ward off further attacks," Obuele said.

Efforts by THISDAY to get the Edo State Police Command's Public Relations Officer, Bello Kontongs, to react did not yield any response.

As at the time of filing this report, Kontongs was yet to respond to the message sent to him on the command's Press Interactive WhatsApp platform.

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