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## 10 killed, 300 homeless as Fulani herdsmen invade Benue villages

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By Peter Duru

**MAKURDI**—No fewer than 10 persons were feared dead yesterday, in an outbreak of fresh hostilities between Fulani herdsmen and farmers at Tom-Anyiin and Tom-Ataan communities, Mbaya, Tombu in Buruku Local Government Area of Benue State.

This is just as the Council Chairman, Godwin Iorsue, the Divisional Police Officer at Buruku, the Area Commander and other stakeholders in the area, on assessment tour of the communities, were ambushed and attacked by the herdsmen who had seized the area and sacked the inhabitants.

*Vanguard* gathered that the renewed crisis has created a huge refugee situation in the area with over 300 people displaced from the affected communities and scores injured in the bloody clash.

A source from one of the affected communities disclosed that the Fulani invaders stormed the communities late Saturday night, shooting sporadically and burning down houses, huts, food barn, farmland and economic trees.

The source said: “As I speak with you, fighting is still raging in the affected communities. Although I cannot give you a precise figure of the dead, about 10 have been killed, many are missing and many others sustained injuries.”

Meanwhile, the Council Chairman, Mr. Godwin Iorsue, who spoke on phone, said that he had invited senior security officers to accompany him in assessing the situation, when they were ambushed and attacked by the herdsmen.

Iorsue said: “It was only God that saved us. They were over 30 and well armed while we had only four armed police officers with us. Our cars were perforated with bullets.”

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer, Assistant Superintendent Moses Yamu, who confirmed the attack on the Council Chairman and his entourage, said no life was lost.

Yamu said: “The people ran away from their communities in fear of a possible attack by Fulani herdsmen, but there were neither killing nor destruction of property in the area.

“I can confirm that the DPO, the Area Commander, the Caretaker Council Chairman and selected stakeholders were attacked by suspected herdsmen when they visited to assess the situation in the area.”

At press time, *Vanguard* gathered that fighting in the two communities was still raging.

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