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Kaduna villages invasion death toll hits 43

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By Luka Binniyat

KADUNA—Residents of the five villages attacked by herdsmen in Kaura Local Government Area of Kaduna State last Sunday, said the incident was caused by the refusal of a farmer to release his farmland to herdsmen for grazing.

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The death toll, as at Sunday, was said to be 31, while a villager said they had buried 43 yesterday.

However, Kaduna State police spokesman, ASP Aliyu Usman, told Vanguard that the final official casualty figure would be made available, but was yet to do so at

press time.

The villages that came under the latest onslaught are Kigam, Kitakum, Unguwan Magaji, Unguwan Rimi and Kizipi, all in Chawai Chieftdom in Kauru Local Government Area, about 300 kilometers east of Kaduna metropolis.

One of the elders, who spoke in an emotional voice, said: "In September, a herdsman called Haruna, approached a farmer here in Unguwan Magaji, saying he wanted to use a portion of his land for grazing.

"The farmer refused, saying he had prepared the land for planting yam by October. Yet Haruna moved in with his cattle and built straw huts on the farm where he slept."

He said when the matter got to the police, the herdsman attacked everyone with his stick. When he was released, he went back to his hut and started shooting.

This prompted youth to chase him out and raze his hut. That was when the invasion of the villages started.

Simon Arabo, a member of the House of Representatives (Kauru/Lere federal constituency), according to a village source, who displayed pictures to support his claim, was the one who arrived the villages with trucks of policemen and soldiers, Monday morning, which enabled them search the bushes for the dead, and also gave them cash to feed.