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Three mourners killed by suspected herdsmen on Makurdi-Naka road

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By Peter Duru

Makurdi..hree persons were Tuesday evening reportedly ambushed and killed on Makurdi-Naka road by suspected herdsmen while returning from Ayati-Ikpayongo in Gwer East local government area of Benue state where they had gone to mourn and witness the mass burial ceremony of the two Catholic Priests and 17 parishioners killed last month at Mbalom, Gwer East Local government area by militant herdsmen.

Vanguard gathered that the victims including Ajuju Torgbede, Ayange Tyoban and Ukeyima Azongu who rode on a motorbike to the burial ceremony were on their

way back to Naka in Gwer West local government area when they were gruesomely murdered by the marauders.

According to a source who reside close to where the incident happened just few kilometers from the heart of Makurdi town, “it happened around 7pm.

“For some time now that road from Makurdi town to Naka has become a no-go-area for motorist and travelers because of the vast forest which makes it easy for armed herdsmen to graze unnoticed and also attack unsuspecting passersby.

“That evening at about 7pm we noticed that people were running from the Naka axis of the road heading towards Makurdi.

“We were all curious and worried because whenever we noticed such in the past it meant there could be trouble and we would be preparing to flee with our families.

“It was in the mist of the confusion that we started hearing that two young men and a lady on a motorbike from the Ayati-Ikpayongo burial ceremony had been slaughtered on the road by herdsmen as they headed back to Naka.

“Everybody was in fear and people started making calls to the Police. It was few minutes after, that we saw vehicles of security personnel moving towards the area the incident happened. We learnt that they eventually moved the corpses of the victims.”

Confirming the attack when he hosted Nobel Laureate, Professor Wole Soyinka, Thursday in Makurdi, Governor Samuel Ortom said the victims were waylaid by the armed herdsmen and slaughtered.

Governor Ortom said, “the victims attended the mass burial of the priests and other worshipers and were coming back when they were ambushed and killed

by the same mercenaries.

“Whether they are Boko Haram or Libyan mercenaries or Fulani herdsmen or whatever you call them. All that we want is that let justice be done to all of us.”

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