

DPO, 2 policemen, women, children killed in fresh herders' attacks on Benue communities

By Peter Duru

MAKURDI —The Divisional Police Officer, DPO, in charge of Gwer West Local Government Area of Benue State, Mr. Mamud Abubakar, two police personnel, two children and three women have been reportedly killed in separate attacks on Benue State communities by suspected armed

herdsmen.

A source in Naka, the Gwer West headquarters, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the murdered DPO and two other police personnel were ambushed and killed yesterday afternoon on Makurdi-Naka Road shortly after alerting the military personnel on a checkpoint of the presence of large number of armed

herdsmen in the axis and their intention to attack the communities in Gwer West.

The source said: "After alerting the military personnel of the presence of the large number of armed herdsmen on that stretch of road, the military personnel were mobilising to move into the area while the DPO, who was accompanied by two other police men moved ahead slowly.

"But unknown to them, the armed herders had already moved close to a particular spot at Imande community near a bridge, where women sell roasted yam to travellers on the road. They shot and killed the three of them and a farmer, who was at the time returning from the farm.

"As we speak, the people on that axis have all deserted their homes. Though before now, many had packed away from their ancestral homes when it was noticed that armed herdsmen were moving in droves into communities on that axis."

Meanwhile the attack on Makurdi-Naka Road came after a similar attack on Udei and Torkula villages in Guma LGA claimed the lives of two children and three women.

It was gathered from sources in the area that the two children ages between 10 and 13 years were killed by the marauders, who stormed Udei about 9p.m., on Monday while the three women were killed by the marauders in Torkula village at about the same time.

"They came shooting sporadically in Udei village around 9p.m. The people scampered but unfortunately two children were gunned down by the terrorists.

"While that attack was going on, another group almost simultaneously invaded Torkula village, where three women were also murdered. As I speak, there is tension in Guma and people in neighbouring villages are gearing up for any eventuality."

Contacted, Chairman of Guma LGA, Dr. Mike Uba, said he was yet to get full details of the development, adding: "I have already sent my security secretary to the affected communities to ascertain what happened and the number of casualties."

On her part, the Police Public Relations Officer, Catherine Anene, who confirmed the attack and murder of the DPO in Gwer West LGA said she was yet to receive full details of the incident.

Herders invade Borno community, 2 killed, 2 wounded fighters

wounded during an encounter with troops in Damboa.

The sources said the terrorists stormed the town on motorbikes and began shooting sporadically, forcing the residents in the area to run for safety.

He said the terrorists took to their heels after sighting reinforcement troops of 231 Battalion of Operation Hadin Kai. He said no casualty was recorded in the attack.

Meanwhile, about four soldiers were wounded after a roadside improvised explosive device (IED) struck a convoy of troops during a fighting patrol along Wajiroko-Sabon Gari in Damboa Local Government Area of Borno State on Monday.

It was not clear where the soldiers were heading when they stepped on the IED.

They were believed to be from Wajiroko under the 25 Task Force Brigade, Operation Hadin Kai.

The wounded soldiers were transferred to the Maimalari hospitals for medical treatment.

In a related development, no fewer than 13 ISWAP logistics suppliers have been arrested by troops of Operation Hadin Kai in Borno State.

It was gathered that the troops of 29 Task Force Brigade, Benishiek, in conjunction with the Civilian Joint Task Force arrested the suspects during market surveillance at Benishiek market.

Widow, shot, widow of slain P-H

She narrated: "On January 27, 2021, I received a phone call from one Amarachi Nduagwu, that my late husband, Chidi John Onwukwe has been stabbed to death.

"When I got the call, I set out for Port Harcourt. On getting to my address in Port Harcourt, I met Samuel Onwukwe (1st defendant), who lives with my husband. When he saw me, he welcomed me with a smile on his face. I became confused whether the call was a prank.

"I entered the house and I did not see my husband. I now asked Mr. Samuel, where is my husband, he answered that he has been deposited at the military hospital mortuary.

"I went to the guest room where Samuel said my husband slept that night. On entering the room, I noticed that the room was totally mopped and cleaned.

"I saw a knife on the table, the knife was also clean. The knife was my kitchen knife. I asked Samuel who kept the knife on the table. He said it was the robbers that took the knife from my kitchen and left it. Samuel Onwukwe said it was the knife they used to stab him.

"I called the policemen that came with us from Elelenwo and showed them the knife. They took the knife. I requested to see the corpse, they took me to the military hospital.

"I saw his body with several wounds. The mortuary attendant said he was not only stabbed but that he was also shot. They brought out some bullets and gave to the police."

However, the trial judge, Justice Sylvester Poppen, adjourned till February 10, 16 and 17, 2023, for continuation of trial.