

Police officer, 8 others killed in renewed attack on Benue communities by herders



...2 friends killed by suspected Tiv youths
By Peter Duru

Makurdi —Nine persons, among them a police officer, have been killed in a renewed attack by suspected armed herdsmen on communities in Agatu Local Government Area of Benue State.

Meanwhile, there is tension between the Iggede-speaking people of Oju and Obi Local Government Areas of Benue State and their neighbouring Tiv communities in Gwer East and Konshisha Local Government Areas following the killing of two middle-aged men, Jonathan Ogah and Gabriel Ogodo, from Oju LGA by suspected Tiv youths at Ulam community in Gwer East council of the state.

It was gathered that among the communities affected in the latest attacks were Okwutanobe, Okpokpolo, Olegagbani and Ikpele.

According to a local in the area, who preferred anonymity, the attackers invaded the communities from neighbouring Kogi State on Friday and sustained the incursion till, yesterday.

He said: “The attacks started last Friday at Okwutanobe, where two people were killed. On Saturday they attacked Okpokpolo and killed one person.

“On Monday the armed herders invaded Olegagbani where they killed one person, today (yesterday) the same armed herders attacked Ikpele where they killed one Police officer and four people.

“As we speak, people are fleeing their homes but no one knows where they will attack next.”

Contacted, Chairman of Agatu council, James Melvin confirmed that nine persons, including a police officer lost their lives in three days of sustained attacks on Agatu communities.

The chairman said: “I can confirm to you that four people were killed in Okwitanobe, Okpokpolo and Olegugbani while five people, including a police officer, were killed in Ikpele today.”

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He lamented that the renewed attack could be a reprisal to claims by the herders that their cows were rustled by criminals.

Contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Udeme Edet, who said he was yet to receive information on the development assured that there was deployment to the area.