

# Policeman, 16 Villagers Killed In Benue Market Attack



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Wed, 4 Feb 2026 10:10:21 WAT

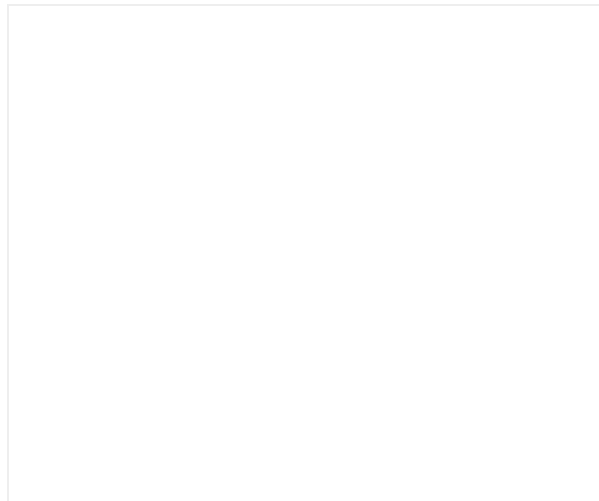


**At least 17 people, including a Mobile Police officer, have been reportedly killed following an attack by armed invaders at a rural market in Abande settlement of Mbaikyor Ward, Turan district, Kwande Local Government Area of Benue State.**

Locals told our correspondent on the telephone that the attack, which occurred on Tuesday, was carried out during the Abande market day, when residents were buying and selling goods.

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A former Supervisory Councillor in Kwande LGA, Akerigba Lawrence, also said the attackers opened fire on traders and residents, killing several people on the spot.



He said shops were also looted, with traders alleging that cash and goods worth more than N150 million were taken before the entire market was set ablaze.



Lawrence explained that as of about 11:55pm on Tuesday, bodies of some of the victims had been evacuated to Jato-Aka by personnel of the Mobile Police Force stationed in the area.

He listed those confirmed dead to include Iornunbe Agba, Chia Kile, Terseer Shenge, Mker Ugbe, Emmanuel Agba Ortswen, Gbinde, and a Mobile Police officer who was the unit commander on duty at the time of the attack, among others.

The former local government official noted that several other residents were still missing as of press time.

Lawrence added that the latest attack has heightened fears among residents of Turan and neighbouring communities over what he described as worsening insecurity in the area.

The affected Abande community is close to Anwase, another community where more than 28 people were reportedly killed during attacks on Christmas Day in 2024.

Residents further alleged that since the beginning of the year, repeated attacks in the area have claimed more than 76 lives, including those of security personnel.





The residents said the Abande community and surrounding settlements, which lie close to the Nigeria–Cameroon border, have little visible presence of Nigerian security forces.

Meanwhile, the Police Spokesperson for the Benue State Command, DSP Udeme Edet, has confirmed four deaths in the attack.

“On 3rd February, 2026, at about 5:30pm, the Divisional Police Officer, Jato-Aka, received a distress call that suspected armed herder bandits, in large numbers, had attacked police personnel stationed at Abande Community as well as members of the community.

“During the ensuing confrontation while police operatives were responding to the distress call, one Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) attached to 13 Police Mobile Force (PMF), Makurdi, who was on special duty at Abande Community, was fatally injured.

“Regrettably, four members of the community also lost their lives as a result of the attack by the bandits.



“Following the incident, combined teams of police operatives and other security agencies have been mobilised to the area to secure the community, conduct a thorough search, and forestall further breakdown of law and order. The deceased persons have been recovered and deposited at the mortuary,” she said.

Edet added that in response to the attack, the Commissioner of Police, Benue State Command, CP Ifeanyi Emenari, has directed the Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of Operations to immediately proceed to Jato-Aka with additional Mobile Force personnel and Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs) to coordinate intensive operations, track the perpetrators, and effect their arrest.