

10 Killed In Fresh Attack On Benue Community



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At least 10 people have been reportedly killed in the early hours of Wednesday when gunmen attacked Saai community in Mbajir ward of Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

Locals said that at least 10 bodies have been recovered, with the exact number of casualties yet to be officially confirmed.

The attack happened a few days after the Benue State Chairman of Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), Alhaji Ardo Risku Muhammad, was ambushed and assassinated shortly after attending a police-arranged peace meeting.

Muhammad was reportedly gunned down on Friday afternoon, while returning home after honouring the police invitation for a peace meeting between herders and farming communities of Ohimini Local Government Area of the state.

Muhammad Idris, the deceased's eldest son, said assailants trailed and killed the MACBAN leader and his associate, Yakubu Isah, while they were returning home.

Speaking on the latest incident, a resident of the Saai community, who preferred not to be named, told Daily Trust that the attackers invaded the community after midnight and started firing gunshots sporadically.

The resident said the people were awoken by the sound of gunshots and began to scamper for safety.

“Some were wounded from the gunshots while others were killed and macheted beyond recognition,” the resident narrated.

The Chairman of Katsina-Ala LGA, Justine Shaku, confirmed the incident to journalists in Makurdi, saying six people died in the attack.

Shaku said tension was still high in the community and promised to provide more details after his assessment.

Reacting to the incident, Benue State Governor, Hyacinth Alia, condemned the attack, describing it as a senseless and cowardly assault on innocent citizens.

In a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Tersoo Kula, the governor said: “These enemies of progress have chosen to disrupt the peace and food security of our state by targeting the moment when crops are developing, and the hope for a bountiful harvest is high.”

The governor directed security agencies to deploy additional personnel to Saai and neighbouring communities, launch a manhunt for the perpetrators, and ensure adequate protection for farmers across the area.

Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Udeme Edet, confirmed the incident, but said five people were killed.

Cleric, 2 others abducted

In another incident, gunmen abducted a clergyman and two others from their residence at NKST Church at Andyar-Ishan in Guma Local Government Area of Benue State.

Residents said the incident happened on Tuesday when the gunmen stormed the clerical quarters and whisked away the three people.

Our correspondent reports that on Wednesday, the Universal Reformed Christian Church (NKST) confirmed the abduction of one of its clerics, Rev. Dr Samuel Gbinde, alongside two members of his congregation by unknown gunmen.

In a statement signed by the NKST General Secretary, Rev. T. A. Targba, the church said the victims were abducted in the early hours of Tuesday from the pastor’s residence.

The church described the incident as unfortunate and expressed confidence in God’s sovereignty while calling on members, congregations and well-wishers to pray for the safe and unconditional release of Rev. Gbinde and the two church members.

The church appealed to security agencies, the Benue State Government and the Federal Government to intensify efforts to secure the safe rescue of the victims and ensure that those behind the

abduction are arrested and prosecuted.

Aondoakaa, Moro demand action

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) governorship candidate for the 2027 election in Benue State, Michael Aondoakaa (SAN), and Senate Minority Leader, Senator Abba Moro, have condemned the recent wave of killings in the state and called for urgent action to end the attacks.

Aondoakaa, a former Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, described the killings as unacceptable.

In a statement by his media aide, James Ian, Aondoakaa also condemned the killing of the Benue State Chairman of MACBAN, Alhaji Ardo Risku Muhammad, and urged security agencies to identify and prosecute those responsible.

He called on the Benue State Government to take proactive measures against terrorists, bandits and other criminal elements.

Similarly, Senator Moro condemned the killing of Muhammad and his associate, Yakubu Isah, who were reportedly ambushed while returning from a peace meeting.

He urged security agencies to conduct a thorough investigation and bring the perpetrators to justice.