

Terrorists kill nine Plateau family members, 18 in Benue attack

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Bandits

Nine members of a single family have been reported murdered in Riyom Local Council Area of [Plateau State](#) after armed bandits and terrorist gangs from the Fass area attacked Wereng-Camp and Kum villages.

The Berom Youth Moulders-Association (BYM) disclosed this yesterday in a statement by its National Publicity Secretary, Rwang Tengwong. BYM said the attack began at about 11:00 p.m. on July 11 and lasted till the early hours of July 12.

In another development, no fewer than 18 persons have been killed in separate attacks on communities in Otukpo Local Council Area of [Benue State](#) following fresh incursions by suspected armed herdsmen.

The attacks over the weekend have heightened concerns about the worsening security situation in Benue South. The first incident reportedly occurred on Friday when the attackers invaded Akpachi Village in Ugboju community, killing two farmers on their farmland. Their bodies were recovered on Saturday and buried.

Barely 24 hours later, at about 4 am on Sunday, the gunmen reportedly attacked the Otukpo-Nobi community, killing

no fewer than 16 persons and injuring several others.

According to the BYM, the assault on the Plateau community was carried out by armed bandits and terrorist gangs from the Fass area, one of the notorious terrorist enclaves in the Jos community.

It listed the victims as Mrs Celina James, 38; Mr Yohanna James, 21; Mrs Janet Yohanna, 18; Baby Jennifer Yohanna, 3 months old; Miss Sele James, 18; Miss Melody James, 16; Reto James, 10; Endurance James, 8; and Peace James, 3.

The statement added that “Mr Pam Yohanna, 40, sustained life-threatening injuries and is currently battling for his life after the coordinated assault.”

The body expressed concern over the sustained pattern of violent attacks targeting predominantly Christian farming communities, describing the latest massacre as another painful reminder of the recurring attacks that have continued to claim the lives of innocent civilians across the state and other parts of North-Central Nigeria.

According to the group, “the frequency of these attacks, the scale of civilian casualties, and the destruction of homes and livelihoods underscore the urgent need for stronger protection of vulnerable communities and meaningful accountability for those responsible.”

The latest Benue killings came about two weeks after the murder of the Benue State Chairman of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), Ardo Mohammed, and his companion, Yakubu Isah, during an ambush at Okutu community in Otukpo.

Following the latest attacks, angry youths yesterday stormed the palace of the Och’Idoma with the corpses of victims, demanding urgent government intervention.

Chanting protest songs, they accused authorities of failing to protect their communities, declaring that they had reached their limit. In the protest, major roads in Otukpo were also blocked, leaving commuters stranded for hours.

Confirming the attacks, the Chairman of Otukpo Local Council, Maxwell Ogiri, said they were possible reprisals following the killing of the MACBAN chairman. He noted that given the mindset of the people involved, there would be reprisals.

Ogiri said efforts were ongoing to relocate survivors to safer places, provide medical assistance, and strengthen security in the affected areas.

Reacting to the killings, Governor Hyacinth Alia described the attack as barbaric and an assault on the lives and peace of Benue residents.

In a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Tersoo Kula, the governor stated that the attacks were unacceptable and vowed that his administration would continue to collaborate with security agencies to protect lives and property.

He directed security agencies in the state to intensify surveillance, collaborate with neighbouring states, pursue the attackers and ensure that they are brought to justice.