

Plateau tragedy: Death toll hits 20, clinic attacked

June 23, 2026 12:52 am



By James Abraham

Kindly share this story:



The death toll from Sunday night's attack on Kawel village in Mushere District, Bokkos Local Government Area of Plateau State, has risen to 22, with health workers, patients and security personnel among the victims, residents and community leaders have said.

Residents who confirmed the incident to *The PUNCH* in Jos on Monday said gunmen invaded the community late Sunday, "shooting sporadically and attacking residents."

The state police command, on Monday, confirmed that 20 people were killed in the attack.

In a statement issued by the state Police Public Relations Officer, SP Alfred Alabo, the command said the attack occurred "in the early hours of Sunday, 21st June 2026, at about 04:40am."

It added, "The Plateau State police command is deeply saddened to confirm an attack on Kawel Community, Mushere District, Bokkos Local Government Area, in the early hours of Sunday, 21st June 2026, at about 04:40am, by a group of armed hoodlums."

According to the police, "Upon receipt of the information, the Commissioner of Police Plateau State Command, CP Bassey Ewah, immediately directed the Divisional Police Officer, Bokkos Division, to mobilise police personnel to the scene.

“The team, in collaboration with operatives of the command’s Violent Crime Response Unit (VCRU) and other sister security agencies, engaged the assailants in a fierce gun battle, forcing them to retreat.”

The police gave a breakdown of casualties: “Regrettably, eighteen (18) persons were confirmed dead at the scene of the attack, while three (3) others were rushed to the hospital for medical attention.

“Subsequently, two (2) of the injured victims were confirmed dead by a medical doctor, bringing the total number of casualties to twenty (20).

“The remains of the victims have since been released to their families for burial, as the families declined an autopsy.”

Ewah commiserated with the families of the deceased and the peace-loving people of Bokkos LGA over this tragic incident.

To prevent further attacks, the commissioner directed the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Operations, and the Area Commander, Pankshin, to relocate to the affected area and coordinate an on-ground security operation.

He also deployed additional tactical teams and personnel of the Police Mobile Force to the area to de-escalate tension, restore confidence, and commence an intensive manhunt for the perpetrators.

CP Ewah called on residents “to remain calm, go about their lawful activities, and continue to provide credible, accurate, and timely information that will assist security agencies in their efforts to maintain peace and security across the state.”

The spokesman for the Military Taskforce in Plateau State, Capt Chinonso Oteh, acknowledged a security breach in the area.

“I just got to know that something happened in the community not long ago. I know our men are there, but I have not been briefed about what happened. When I get information, I will let you know,” he said.

Security sources said troops had been deployed to surrounding bushes and forests in Mushere District in a manhunt for the attackers.

Related News

Insecurity: Centre faults Reps minority leader’s call to suspend election activities

Secure Nigeria, protect citizens, criminologist urges Tinubu

Another General falls

A Red Cross official involved in emergency response operations said the attackers also targeted the community's primary healthcare centre, killing health workers and patients receiving treatment.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the gunmen stormed the facility and opened fire on personnel and patients.

"Those confirmed dead include civilians and security personnel, while several others sustained varying degrees of gunshot and machete injuries," the official said.

The official added that "survivors had been evacuated for medical attention and stabilisation."

The Bokkos Youth Leader, Christopher Luka, who earlier confirmed 19 deaths, said the toll had risen following fresh assessments.

"I visited the hospital and saw the situation myself. So far, 22 deaths have been recorded, including women. The victims are yet to be buried because of the rainfall experienced since morning.

"The victims included health workers serving at the hospital and some patients who were receiving treatment," Luka said.

The Chairman of the Community Peace Observers in Bokkos LGA, Kefas Mallai, also confirmed the killings.

"It was in the early hours of today that some terrorists attacked a village called Kawei, Mushere community in Bokkos LGA. And they successfully killed about 22 people," Mallai said.

According to him, security personnel later arrived at the scene but were unable to apprehend the attackers.

"So, the criminals left without being apprehended, but the security agents are now scattered in the bushes looking for whether they can arrest any of the perpetrators," he said.

Mallai described the situation as tense, noting that residents were in mourning.

He also accused security agencies of inaction despite prior intelligence, alleging that attackers operate from nearby occupied communities.

He listed affected areas as Hokk, Luwa-Pan and Kadim, which he said were being used as hideouts.

"We have those occupied communities like Hokk, Luwa-Pan, Kadim and other places where those terrorists are presently occupying," he said.

He urged security agencies to take decisive action to prevent further attacks, warning that continued violence would persist unless the alleged hideouts were addressed.

The attack comes less than a week after the killing of the District Head of Gwande in Bokkos LGA, Saf Samuel Alaket, who was reportedly attacked along the Sha District axis bordering Daffo community while returning from a traditional council meeting.

| James Abraham