

Herdsmen kill Police officer, 16 villagers in Benue community

4th February 2026

...Police confirm new attack, five deaths

From Scholastica Hir, Makurdi

Not fewer than persons have been confirmed dead following a violent attack on Abande settlement in Mbaikyor Ward, Turan, Kwande Local Government Area of Benue State.

The Benue State Police Command has, however confirmed the attack carried out by suspected armed bandits on police personnel and residents of Abande Community, in Kwande Local Government Area of Benue State.

A community leader, Lawrence Akerigba, told newsmen that 17 persons have been confirmed dead following the violent attack.

He said the attack which occurred early Tuesday, February 3, 2026, has left the community in deep shock and mourning.

According to him, “Yesterday was Abande market, people were buying and selling when the herders attacked them. Shops were looted, millions of naira were collected from marketers while the whole market was set ablazed.

“As at 11:55 p.m. local time, some of the victims’ bodies were conveyed to Jato Aka by personnel of the Mobile Police Force stationed in the area. Among the deceased are Iornunbe Agba, Chia Kile, Terseer Shenge, Mker Ugbe Emmanuel Agba Ortswen Gbinde and a Mobile Police officer, the unit commander, who was on duty at the time of the incident. So many others missing.”

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In a statement made available to newsmen, the Commissioner of Police, Benue State Command, Ifeanyi Emenari explained that “On 3rd February, 2026, at about 17:30hr, 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 during the attack.

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

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The statement signed by the Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Udeme Edet, said combined teams of police operatives and other security agencies have been mobilized to the area to secure the community, conduct a thorough search, and forestall further breakdown of law and order.

He said the deceased persons have been recovered and deposited at the mortuary.

The PPRO said in response to the attack, the Commissioner of Police 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.

He commiserated with the families of the deceased and the Abande Community, and assured the public that all necessary measures are being taken to bring the perpetrators to justice and restore peace to the area.

He assured that further developments will be communicated as investigations and operations continue.

Community members say the latest assault has worsened the security situation in Turan and its surrounding communities, where residents continue to live in fear of further attacks.