

Hours After Coas' Visit, Herdsmen Kill 16 People In Benue Communities



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Suspected armed Fulani terrorists on Thursday night launched a violent attack on Mbaav and Mbadura communities in Turan district of Kwande Local Government Area of Benue State killing at least 16 people with scores of others injured and rendered homeless.

The invading herdsmen reportedly made the incursion into the local government from different entry points when most people were asleep, launched the twin attack shooting sporadically during which 16 people were killed. A community leader from the area, Mr Lawrence Akerigba, confirmed the deadly attack to Saturday Telegraph in Makurdi, saying the inhabitants were taken unawares.

Akerigba said many injured people are receiving treatment at various medical facilities in Jato-Aka town while others were being rushed to the Benue State University Teaching Hospital in Makurdi town. He said bodies of deceased persons recovered from the bush were deposited at the morgue in Jato Aka.



He disclosed that both business and social activities were grounded to a halt as a result of the incident. The attack took place a few hours after the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lieutenant General Waidi Shaibu, who visited Governor Hyacinth Alia and disclosed that an additional battalion of troops had been deployed to Kwande Local Government Area to strengthen ongoing security operations had left.

The All Progressives Congress (APC) under Comrade Austin Agada has swiftly condemned the massacre, demanding immediate action. The party in a statement by its spokesman, Daniel Ihomun for the Chairman expressed deep sorrow over the killings describing it as barbaric and one too many.

“This barbaric attack on peaceful farming communities by suspected armed Fulani bandits is one too many. “The continuous slaughter of our people raises serious concerns, especially in the face of repeated assurances by the Alia administration that the situation is under control.

“Let it be clear: the people of Turan will not be driven away from their ancestral lands by terrorists. “Benue belongs to its people, and no community should live under the fear of violent displacement”. The party called on security agencies to move immediately and decisively to hunt down the perpetrators of this heinous crime and bring them to justice.

It regretted that while the people are being killed in their villages, illegal mining activities continue undisturbed in Kwande Local Government Area, with those operating the illegal mines going about their activities without any attacks.

“This raises serious questions that the Benue State government must urgently address. “We therefore demand the immediate suspension of all mining activities in Kwande Local Government Area until the killings of innocent citizens are brought to an end and security is fully restored.

“We pray for the peaceful repose of the souls of the victims and ask God to grant strength and comfort to their grieving families, Turan community and the entire people of Kwande Local Government”.