

Bandits Kill 15 Farmers In Benue Days After MACBAN Chairman's Murder



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...Alia, Aondoakaa condemn attack, killing; orders security to launch manhunt for perpetrators

Barely a week after suspected [bandits ambushed and murdered the Benue State Chairman of Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria \(MACBAN\)](#), gunmen have made a deadly incursion into the Sai community of Mbajir council ward in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of the state killing no fewer than 15 local farmers.

It was gathered that the attackers invaded the now deserted communities in the wee hours of Wednesday, and started shooting sporadically during which several people were killed, several others injured and rushed to the hospitals for treatment and many villagers missing.

The Katsina-Ala Local Government Chairman, Hon. Dr Shakur Justine, who confirmed the incident said six people were killed and 18 others injured.

Shakur noted that he was in Sai for an on-the-spot assessment of the carnage and to beef up security to build confidence in the residents and appealed to them to be calm.

Local sources however said the death toll would likely increase following the night raid, just as both the state and local authorities were making frantic efforts in monitoring the situation to track the attackers.

[Governor Hyacinth Alia](#) and the governorship candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Chief Michael Kaase Aondoakaa, have since condemned the gruesome attack and killing of the innocent people.

The Governor, in a statement issued by his Chief Press Secretary, Tersoo Kula, described the tragedy as a “Senseless assault on innocent citizens”, saying that he received news of the attack with a heavy heart.

He said, “This attack is an ugly, cowardly and unacceptable act of violence, particularly coming at a crucial time when our hardworking farmers who have returned to their ancestral lands are cultivating their farms.

“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”.

[Governor Alia](#) extended his deepest condolences to the families who have lost their loved ones in the tragedy, adding that, “my heart goes out to those who lost their loved ones as well as other victims currently receiving medical attention; and prayed for their swift and total recovery.

He implored the people of Katsina-Ala and Benue State in general not to be discouraged because his administration remains unwavering in its commitment to protecting the lives and property of the citizenry.

Governor Alia therefore directed security agencies to among other things deploy additional personnel to Sai and surrounding communities to prevent further incursions by terrorists and armed herdsmen, launch a manhunt for the perpetrators of this heinous crime to ensure they are brought to face the wrath of the law, and ensure the safety of farmers as they tend to their crops, guaranteeing that no further disruption to agricultural activities occurs.

Also, the state’s governorship candidate of the PDP, Chief Michael Kaase Aondoakaa, in his reaction, condemned the heinous acts of violence, adding that no grievance, political agenda, or criminal ambition can ever justify the brutal murder of innocent citizens, the destruction of livelihoods, or the displacement of families from their ancestral homes.

Aondoakaa said, "Our hearts go out to the bereaved families, the people of Katsina-Ala, and the entire Sankera axis during this painful period. These are not mere statistics; they are fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, brothers, and sisters whose lives and futures have been cruelly cut short. This devastating cycle of bloodshed must end".

He urged the people of Sai and the wider Benue community, not to lose hope as according to him, "we believe a safer and more peaceful Benue is achievable through determined leadership, strategic action, and collective resolve".