

# Gunmen kill 15 in Benue

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Gunmen have killed 15 villagers in Yaav council ward of Kwande Local Government Area of Benue State.

Daily Trust gathered from locals that the killings occurred between Sunday night and yesterday morning.

A local said that 13 bodies were recovered in yesterday's attack at Alaba community while two others were killed in Ikyowen village on Sunday.

The Benue State Police Command Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Moses Joel Yamu, confirmed only two deaths in the fresh attack, saying, "We had information that Alaba and Manda-Ordue communities in Yaave council ward of Kwande LGA was under attack by suspected herdsmen. Mobile policemen have been deployed to the area to arrest the situation as two persons, namely Keemo Anumen, 65, and Tarvershima Dabo, 46, have so far been confirmed dead."

The troubled vicinity was believed to have been taken over by the Fulani herders who had inhabited the area for more than three years after chasing away the natives until recently when Governor Samuel Ortom and his counterpart in Taraba State brokered peace among the warring factions.

It was learnt that the Tiv speaking natives of Benue state had just started returning to their deserted homes which borders Taraba when the fresh crisis broke out few days ago, now causing the villagers to flee their abodes again.

The State Coordinator of Myetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), Garus Gololo, said that he was not aware of any herders occupying the disputed area after peace was brokered few weeks ago by the two governors.

Gololo said whatever fresh killings was going on in the affected area must be the handiwork of criminal elements bent on spoiling the good name of herders or to otherwise sabotage government's effort at restoring peace.