

Gunmen kill 27 in Benue

From Hope Abah Emmanuel,
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Gunmen have killed 27 people in the Odugbeho community of Agatu Local Government Area in Benue State.

Villagers said a total of 27 dead bodies have been recovered so far in the attack which occurred about 6 pm on Sunday.

The villagers narrated to our correspondent on phone that the gunmen whom they described as armed herders invaded the community at almost dusk and began to

shoot sporadically.

A witness, simply identified as, Onehi, claimed 11 corpses including that of a fresh graduate were recovered same night while the remaining were found in the bush early hours of Monday.

Sule Audu, a former lawmaker from Agatu Constituency at the State House of Assembly, said he got a report early hours of Monday that 24 corpses were recovered and that the search for more bodies was ongoing.

The Agatu Council Chairman, Adayi Sule, confirmed to our

correspondent by telephone that a total of 27 people were killed in the affected rural community.

Sule explained that the gunmen suspected to be armed herders took advantage of the community's market day and a burial ceremony in the village to unleashed terror on the people.

The chairman who had just returned from visiting the area, said his team was conducted around the recovered bodies, some of whom were already buried in fresh graves.

He added that most of the villagers have fled to take refuge in neighbouring communities including Ogbaaulu village.

The spokesperson for the Benue Police Command, DSP Catherine Anene, confirmed the attack on Agatu community.

"The commissioner of police has deployed more police officers to manage the incident and forestall further breakdown of law and order. Number of victims is yet to be ascertained as officers are still engaged in stabilising the area," Anene said.