

# Protest rocks Benue community over killings

## ● As death toll hits 50

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Makurdi

**A**ngry youths, yesterday blocked the Otukpo-Adoka-Oweto-Abuja federal highway in Ughokpo town of Apa Local Government Area of Benue State to protest continued killing of villagers by armed invaders.

*Daily Trust Saturday* reports that several communities in Apa, Agatu, as well as Otukpo local government areas, had in recent times come under deadly invasions.

The blockage of the road left travellers going or coming from Abuja stranded for several hours on Friday as the protesting

youths demanded an end to incessant killings in the area.

One of the protesters, Oche Agama, told our correspondent on telephone that they wanted government's intervention on what was going on in their area.

Also, the national chairman of Apa Development Association, Eche Akpoko, a lawyer,

confirmed that the youths are aggrieved by the wanton destruction of human lives and property in their area.

The chairman of Apa Local Government, Mrs Patricia Amali, told journalists that the protest was triggered by the latest huge number of people killed in Umogidi village of Otukpo Local Government Area.

Amali added that

the protest was peaceful until hoodlums hijacked it, noting, however, that the prompt intervention of security operatives forestalled a breakdown of law and order.

Reacting to the protest, the special adviser to the Benue State governor on security matters, Lt Col Paul Hemba (retd), said he had been told by the state commissioner of

police, Wale Abass, that the situation had been brought under control.

In a related development, the people of Umogidi in Adoka district of Otukpo, where 46 deaths were reportedly recorded on Thursday, said that four additional corpses had been recovered.

This brings the number of people so far killed in Umogidi in one swoop to 50.

Tribunal strikes out motion to halt