

Police officer, groom, 8 others killed in attacks on Benue communities

From Hope Abah,
Makurdi

Ten people, including a police officer and a newlywed man, have been killed in separate attacks across Benue State, sparking fresh concerns over rising insecurity.

In Agatu Local Government Area, gunmen launched a series of deadly attacks on four villages—Okwutanobe, Okpokpolo, Olegagbani, and Ikpele—between Friday and Tuesday.

Eyewitnesses said the attackers, believed to be operating from neighbouring Kogi State, often strike under the cover of night and retreat before security personnel can

respond.

Tuesday's assault on Ikpele was the deadliest, claiming the lives of a police officer and four civilians.

Earlier, two residents were killed in Okwutanobe on Friday, one in Okpokpolo on Saturday, and another in Olegagbani on Monday, bringing the total death toll in Agatu to nine.

Agatu LGA Chairman, James Melvin, confirmed the attacks, suggesting they may have been reprisal assaults linked to allegations of cattle rustling reported by the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN).

Melvin lamented that the poor road network in Agatu continues to hamper rapid security response.

However, the State Secretary of MACBAN, Ibrahim Galma, told our correspondent via telephone that he was unaware of the incidents.

He promised to consult with the Agatu council chairman and members of his association in the area before making any official comment.

When contacted, the spokesperson for the Benue State Police Command, DSP Udeme Edet, said she had not yet received an official briefing on the matter but confirmed that security presence in the affected area had been reinforced.

Meanwhile, in a separate incident on Monday, gunmen killed a groom,

Jonathan Uko, and his friend, Ogoda Gabriel, along the Awajir-Oju Road in Gwer East LGA.

The victims, both of

Igede descent from Oju LGA, were travelling on a motorcycle from Oju to Makurdi when they were ambushed and killed.

Governor Hyacinth Alia also denounced the killings and ordered the immediate arrest of those responsible within 48 hours.

THE HOSPITAL SERVICES MANAGEMENT BOARD (HSMB) AND AHMED SANI YARIMAN BAKURA SPECIALIST HOSPITAL (ASYBSH) GUSAU, ZAMFARA STATE

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