

Suspected Militiamen Kill Dozens In Taraba Community

Suspected militiamen reportedly opened fire on residents of Takum, a Taraba community Sunday morning, killing dozens.

Residents said the attackers were from Benue State, suggesting it was part of the raging Tiv-Junkun violence. The death toll was still be-

ing determined by the police and emergency officials as at Sunday night, but a member of the local vigilante group said 14 residents were killed.

About 20 militiamen were also reportedly gunned down after Takum residents pursued them into the bush to ward off the attack, according to a vigilante mem-

ber.

"The attack occurred in the morning and security agents were deployed there," Taraba police spokesperson, David Misal, was reported to have said, adding that "they have been combing the area to flush out any attackers who may be hiding nearby".

The police spokesperson

said figures of casualties would be determined after all threats in the area had been neutralised.

The attackers were said to have slipped into Takum through the mountains of Angwan Abakwa and Wukari Road.

Natives were said to have suspected that the deadly

raid was a reprisal for the killing of a Catholic priest, David Tanko, in Kufai Ahma-du, near Takum, last week.

Tanko was reportedly on his way to a peace meeting in Takum before he was killed and his vehicle burnt in the August 29 attack.

The peace talk was scheduled as part of an ongoing

dialogue to reduce violence between Tiv and Junkun ethnic groups in Taraba State.

Two days before Tanko was killed, several people were reportedly killed in the crisis, which has continued to escalate despite efforts by security agencies to contain it.

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