

# Bandits Kill 17, Injure Others In Benue

Written by **Hembadoon Orsar** 2 days ago **News**

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Police in Benue State have said 15 people and two police officers were killed in an attack by bandits in Ayati community of Ukum local government area.

Police spokesperson, Catherine Anene, said in a statement yesterday that on August 8 at about 16:30hrs the area was invaded by a large number of armed bandits who shot sporadically at residents.

She said the police within the community responded immediately and were able to repel the bandits, adding that however, that 15 people who sustained gunshot injuries were confirmed dead on arrival at the hospital. But the commissioner for information, culture and tourism, Mathew Abo, in an interview with our correspondent in Makurdi, said over 30 people were killed while scores were injured.

He said an unconfirmed number of people sustained injuries, though security personnel had been deployed to the area, as more corpses were being recovered.

He said, "I received reports this morning from my home local government area that bandits yesterday night invaded Ayati community and so far 30 corpses have been recovered and more corpses are being recovered from the surrounding bushes as security personnel are combing the area."

The commissioner said the attackers are bandits battling for supremacy, adding that some of them were from Tine-Nune but their maternal home is Ayati while the other ones were from Ayati and their maternal home is Tine-nune.

Abo was kidnapped immediately after his appointment as commissioner but was later released.

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A community leader and one-time governorship aspirant in the state, Shima Ayati, also said over 30 corpses were recovered as search was in progress yesterday.

Ayati who spoke in a telephone conversation on Friday said, "What I heard is that some bandits received money from some herders to graze their animals in two council wards.

"As they were grazing, they came in conflict with farmers who ran to the government. The government sent security personnel who went and pursued the herders away. During the process, they

burnt the herders' makeshift tents.

"The herders became angry as they claimed to have given money for the land, so they went back to the bandits.

The herders joined hands with the bandits to attack the village."