

Soldier, others 'killed' in fresh Benue attacks

AT least 12 persons including a soldier have been feared killed in another armed herdsman invasion of communities in Apa Local Government Area of Benue State.

Recently communities in Apa and Otukpo Local Government areas, both in Benue South Senatorial District had been under bloody attacks from criminal herders.

The latest incident was said to have occurred on Tuesday night at Opaha, Odugbo and Edikwu in Apa Local Government Area.

The affected communities were said to have been attacked simultaneously.

A victim, Paul Omar, who escaped by whiskers, said the

From Uja Emmanuel, Makurdi

slain soldier was attached to Operation Whirl Stroke (OPWS).

He said his body and those of others killed have been recovered.

Chairman of Apa Development Association, Eche Akpoko, confirmed the attacks to The Nation.

Akpoko said 10 bodies including the soldier's had been recovered, adding that he was yet to get an update as at 10:30am.

State Commissioner for Finance, David Olofu, a native of Opaha, one of the affected villages, put the death toll at 17, stating that the bodies of 15 vil-

lagers and two soldiers were recovered Wednesday morning.

Olofu said he was on his way to the village to assess the situation at the time of this report.

But the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) for Benue Command, SP Kate Anene, said she was unaware of the attacks.

Contacted, spokesman for OPWS, Flight Lieutenant D.O. Oquah, said he was out of town and could not speak on the matter.

Sector Commander of OPWS in charge of Apa LGA, Major Ogundile, could also not be reached as his telephone was switched off.