

Death toll from Benue Christmas Day attacks rises to 20



The death toll in the Christmas Day bloody attacks by herdsmen against Anwase and Nyieya communities in Turan, Kwande Local Government Area of **Benue State** has risen to 20.

Armed herdsmen had on December 25 launched blistering attacks on harmless villagers who were celebrating Christmas.

The attackers shot indiscriminately at worshipers who were in the church for Christmas service and also set many houses and yam barns ablaze.

Lawrence Akerigba, an indigene of one of the affected communities, told The Nation in an interview that “a family of four including husband, wife and two children were slaughtered.

Akerigba also said more than 100,000 tumblers of yams were set ablaze while over 400 persons were displaced.

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Many others, he said, sustained various degrees of injuries and were taken to the hospital for treatment.

Confirming the incident, the President General of Mzough U Tiv (MUT) Worldwide, CP Iorbee Ihagh (rtd), who hails from Kwande Local Government Area, said: "I contacted the community head in the area who confirmed the attack, saying that several people were killed on Christmas Day and the attack was unprovoked."

Ihagh said many people were killed as 10 bodies were recovered in the first instance while 10 more have been recovered, bringing the total to 20.

Governor Hyacient Alia, who condemned the attack and killing vowed to bring the perpetrators to book.