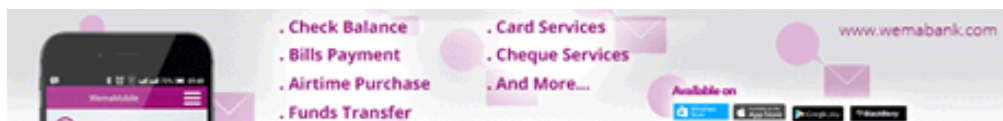


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Gunmen kill PDP chieftain, 15 others in Benue, Nasarawa

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A chieftain of the Peoples Democratic Party in Benue State, Atoza Hindan, on Friday morning was killed by some yet to be identified gunmen in Kastina-Ala, Kastina Local Government Area of the state.

Saturday PUNCH gathered that the gunmen also killed 12 other people in Tor Donga, Vaase and Kastina/Ala.

The late Hindan was an in-law to the Senator representing Benue North-East Senatorial District, Barnabas Gemade, and was popularly referred to as former Governor Gabriel Suswam's father.

The deceased's first son, Terfa, who served as Suswam's Commissioner for Commerce and Industry, described the killing as unfortunate

and shocking.

He called on security agencies to bring the killers to justice.

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Austin Ezeani, confirmed the killings, adding that three bodies had been evacuated from the scenes.

Ezeani vowed that detectives would arrest the suspects.

Also in Nasarawa State, no fewer than 100 gunmen on Friday morning invaded Kofar Gwari village in Kokona Local Government Area of Nasarawa State and killed three members of a vigilance group and two others.

The incident occurs at about 1.30am.

Saturday PUNCH learnt that the incident happened when some members of the vigilance group were holding a meeting on how to address the spate of reckless killings and kidnapping of innocent people in the area.

Two other members of the vigilance group were also injured.

According to an eye witness, the gunmen stormed the venue of the meeting with AK47 rifles.

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Mr. Ismaila Numan, confirmed the incident to *Saturday*

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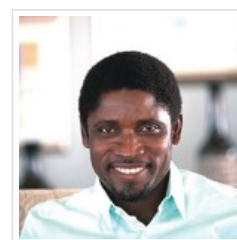
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