

12 feared killed in Benue, youths protest Katsina killings

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No fewer than 12 people were reportedly killed on Sunday in Okokolo village by some youths allegedly from Abugbe village — both in Agatu Local Government Area of Benue State.

No one could explain the reason for the early morning attacks on Okokolo village but it was gathered that a peace meeting was held on Saturday between Abugbe and Agbaduma communities where a peace agreement was signed.

The two communities, Abugbe and Agbaduma, were said to have been at loggerheads for a while.

It was gathered that the invading Abugbe youths stormed Okokolo community while the locals were in the church.

Many houses were also said to have been burnt down while many people were reportedly still missing as of the time of filing this report.

An eyewitness, who is an indigene of Okokolo village, John Ikwulono, told one of our correspondents that there was no prior issue between Okokolo and Abugbe people to warrant the attack.

“Just on Saturday, Agbaduma and Abugbe communities signed a peace agreement and promised to remain peaceful,” he said.

Ikwulono said about 12 corpses had been found, adding that more people were still missing.

He listed those who were confirmed dead from Okokolo to include Baba Odoje, Shaidu Magaji (a retired military man), Oloche Obiabo (Kaddo), Adehi Imaikwu and Maji Baba.

Others, according to him, are Ngbede Ibrahim, Bello-Gene-Galih, Mr Ekoja, Adams Dogara as well as one late Francis Idu’s wife and her two children.

Ikwulono said so many persons, including Mrs Mary Adakonye, a health worker who sustained bullet injuries, were receiving treatment at different hospitals in Agatu.

The former supervisory councillor said the situation, if not properly handled, was capable of destroying the entire Agatu.

The Caretaker Chairman, Agatu Local Government Area of the state, Usman Alilu, said soldiers in the area had been directed to arrest the perpetrators of the evil act.

“We are on top of the situation now,” Alilu said.

Also, the Benue State Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party, Sir John Ngbede, also an indigene of Agatu, said he had already informed the caretaker chairman to make sure soldiers arrest everyone involved in the attack.

Efforts to reach the State Police Command were not successful as the Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Catherine Anene, did not pick her calls and did not return the calls as of the time of filing this report.

Meanwhile, protest erupted on Sunday at Kankara town in Katsina State following bandits' attack on Dankado village where 15 people were reportedly killed.

Dankado is one of villages surrounding Kankara, the headquarters of Kankara Local Government Area.

The town was still inaccessible because of the protest as of the time of filing this report (3.15 pm) on Sunday.

Sources said the bandits had on Saturday attacked the village, shooting at every object on sight.

One of the sources said, "The bandits used to invade our village, rustle our cattle, steal our money and take away our women. But yesterday (Saturday), they came at about 6pm and were shooting anyhow. Majority of those killed were women."

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Residents of the village brought the corpses to the palace of Sarkin Pawwa (District Head of Kankara) on Sunday.

The residents also reportedly brought those who sustained injuries to the General Hospital, Kankara for medical attention.

Many motorists, especially those travelling to Kaduna and Abuja through Kankara, abandoned the route due to the incident.

The spokesman for the Katsina State Police Command, SP Gambo Isah, had yet to react to the incident as of the time of filing this report.

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