## 18 killed as bandits, vigilantes clash in Plateau

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By James Abraham

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A total of 18 persons have reportedly lost their lives after bandits and members of vigilance groups clashed in the Wase Local Government Area of Plateau State.

Some residents of Wase who confirmed the incident on Sunday said 16 of those killed were bandits while two other victims were identified as members of a local vigilance group in the area.

According to the residents, the incident happened in the Bangalala community of the Council area on Saturday evening.

A source said, "The bandits who had earlier given a quit notice to residents to evacuate or be attacked, had invaded the village with the aim of attacking the people when they met stiff resistance from the local vigilantes.

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"The bandits thought they would have it easy as always when they attacked Bangalala but they were surprised when the local vigilantes stood up to them and 16 of them were killed while others escaped with injuries. Sadly, we lost two of the gallant vigilante members."

The spokesman for the state Police Command, Alabo Alfred, denied knowledge of the killings when contacted by The PUNCH on Sunday in Jos.

He said, "The attack by the bandits or killings in Wase community was not reported to the police. So, we are not aware of any killings in the community but we are investigating to ascertain whether it actually happened or not.