

Gunmen kill 31 in Zamfara, 25 in Benue

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Bandits have attacked Janbako and Sakida villages of Maradun Local Government Area of Zamfara State, killing 31 people and injuring several others.

An indigene of the area, Mallam Abubakar Mohammed, told Sunday PUNCH in a telephone interview that the bandits in their large number attacked the two communities on Saturday afternoon.

According to him, the bandits invaded Janbako village around 2.30pm where they killed 28 people and injured several others.

They later moved to Sakida village where they killed three and injured many others.

Mohammed said, “We had just finished afternoon prayer when we heard gunshots and everybody ran helter-skelter for safety. The bandits shot aimlessly immediately they arrived at our village and they were able to kill 28 persons and injured several others. They later moved to Sakida Village very close to our village where they also launched an attack, killing three on the spot and injuring several others.”

He said the people of the two communities had fled to other places.

All efforts to speak to the police public relations officer in the state, SP Yazid Abubakar, proved abortive as he did not answer his phone calls.

Governor Dauda Lawal Dare had during his inauguration speech on May 29 promised to fight banditry in the state. He promised that there would be farming in the state this year.

Also, in Benue State, gunmen suspected to be lieutenants of terrorist leader, Terwase Akwanza, also known as Gana, launched a renewed attack on Imande Mbakange and other neighbouring communities on Saturday and killed many people.

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Residents of the area said about 25 people were killed in the incident which happened in the communities in Mbacher council ward in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of the state.

The gunmen were reported to have launched the deadly attack on the affected communities, burnt down houses and several persons were reportedly injured in the process.

One of the locals who spoke to our correspondent on the telephone on Saturday evening said the gunmen rode on motorcycles into the communities.

The source said, “They came in their numbers on motorcycles and began to shoot indiscriminately, which made people run in different directions. At the time the gunmen left, youths in the area were able to recover 25 corpses while many people were still missing.”

When contacted, the Chairman, Katsina-Ala Local Government Area, Atera Alfred, who confirmed the attack, said local bandits in the area attacked the communities.

He said, “It is true. This morning, some gunmen attacked Imande Mbakange community and other neighbouring communities in Mbacher Council ward.”

He said they were local bandits, adding that security operatives had moved to the affected communities. He said as of the time of the interview, over 10 corpses had been recovered.

Also, the spokesperson for the state police command, Catherine Anene, confirmed the incident but said she was yet to get the details.

Anene said in a terse statement, “Incident confirmed but details are yet to be received, please.”