

NEWXTRA

# Gunmen on Rampage in Benue, Kill 24 on Eid-el-Fitri Day

**George Okoh** in Makurdi

Gunmen yesterday killed over 24 persons including a Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, stalwart and elder statesman, Chief Atoza Ihindan, in Katsina/Ala local government area of the state.

This is as another set of gunmen yesterday killed a family of three when they attacked and killed one Mr Temongo Ajai, his wife Rebecca, one Iyomanger Nwana and another relation, Ujah all of Gbengen village, in Utange council ward of Katsina/Ala local government area.

According to a source, three armed men riding on a motorbike, ambushed Chief Ihindan at his construction site in Katsina/Ala

town on Friday morning around 10am and was shoot repeatedly.

"They stormed the place in a commando style, though, the old man had with him, his aide and a police escort who after noticing the armed men, made desperate effort to defend Chief, but he was overpowered by the well armed men who had superior fire power.

"They succeeded in killing the old man after shooting his police escort who was seriously injured and in critical condition at a public hospital in Katsina/Ala at the moment.

"After successfully executing their assignment, the gang fled and the suspicion is that it was that same gang or members of the same group of bandits that raided a beer parlour

at a market square in Tor Donga, last night, where 12 persons including a woman attendant and her one year old baby were killed.

"After raiding and killing their victims at the drinking spot, the gang sped off on their motorbike and continued shooting indiscriminately at any human being they came across, or anyone that dared to stop them and that led to the killing of another seven persons including a teacher in one of the local schools in the community", the source said.

The source who said the killings were recorded in the last 48 hours stressed further that Katsina/Ala local government was like a town under siege where residents now

live in fear.

When asked who could be responsible for the bloodbath in the area, the source said "no one is sure of anything now, because so much rumours and stories are flying but we expect the Police to unravel the mystery and stop the unending killings in Katsina/Ala before everyone resort to self help."

"The way we are going anarchy is looming, the killing of Chief Ihindan is one too many, we all recall that a top Police Officer from the Force Headquarters who was a member of the Task Force on Kidnapping and cow rustling, on a special mission to the state was also killed here few weeks back by unknown armed men".