

Gunmen kill 32 in Benue, Borno communities

BY PETER DURU &
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① **N**O fewer than 32 persons were killed by gunmen in separate incidents in Benue and Borno communities last Sunday. The bloody attack in Benue State occurred in Agbena and Agbaaga villages in Ukum Local Government area of the state, which left about 18 persons dead.

② The Borno State incident claimed 14 lives with nine others sustaining various degrees of injury when suspected Boko Haram terrorists attacked Bama community in Bama Local Government Area of the state, Sunday morning.

Vanguard gathered from a source in the areas that the invaders numbering over 20, armed with sophisticated weapons, invaded the Agbena and Agbaaga communities in Benue State at 8p.m. Sunday night without resistance.

Eyewitness' account

The source said: "They invaded the villages in several cars and started shooting anything in sight without resistance from the villagers.

"They also went as far as setting several houses ablaze, while the villagers fled for safety and at the end of the operation that lasted close to four hours, over 17 houses and huts were completely razed.

"At the moment, the affected villages have been deserted

while women and children are seeking refuge in neighbouring villages.

Alleged leader

"We feel strongly that the invaders were led by one notorious robber popularly known as

Gana, who in the past had led several attacks on communities along that axis of the state.

"In this instance, the gang did not take away any loot from their victims and the affected communities. All they did was to kill and set houses ablaze."

Reacting to the incident, the Benue State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Adams Audu, said

the Police was yet to get the full details of the incident.

Police boss reacts

He said: "We must desist from speculating on the nature of the crisis and the number of deaths until the full details are ready and I will make them available to you.

"I just held a meeting with the Divisional Police Officer

after being admitted at the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital, UMTH.

"Bama Local Government will pay all the hospital bills of the surviving eight victims, who are admitted at the UMTH and are currently responding to treatment.

"All the dead and injured are members of the youths volunteer, called *Civilian JTF*."

Owing to lack of telecommunication services in Borno State, Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Gideon Jubrin, and the military Task Force spokesman, Lieutenant Colonel Sagir Musa, could not be reached for confirmation.

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