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## Fresh massacre in Benue, Zamfara: 61 killed, 82 houses razed

ON APRIL 22, 2018 9:53 AM / IN [NEWS](#), [TRENDING](#) / [164 COMMENTS](#)

...Victims mostly women and children

...Tiv leaders cry for help

By Peter Duru, Makurdi

In what is becoming a weekly sordid ritual, 61 persons were, over the weekend, killed in separate dastardly incidents in Benue and Zamfara States.

Whereas 31 persons, mostly women and children, lost their lives in six communities of Guma Local Government Area of Benue State in the hands of suspected herdsmen, another 30 were massacred in Maru Local Government Area of Zamfara State, by suspected gunmen.



**BENUE KILLINGS  
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Sunday Vanguard gathered that 25 persons were killed in coordinated attacks on Tse-Abi, Tse-Ginde, Tse-Peviv, Tse-Ikyo, Agenke and Gbenke communities of Unzughul, Saghev Council Ward in Guma; the killings were said to have commenced from late Friday to the early hours of Saturday.

82 houses were razed by the herdsmen during their orgy of killings in the affected areas of Benue State.

Still in Benue, a bloody clash of rival political and cult groups in Otukpo Local Government Area of the state, accounted for six of the deceased 31.

An eye witness to the Zamfara killings, Mr Shuaibu Kabaro, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Maru, that the suspected gunmen attacked the two communities and the incident was immediately reported to the security agents.

He said three of the bandits were arrested by security agents following the prompt report of the incident to the security personnel.

Benue killings

According to a resident of one of the affected communities, some of the invaders who stormed the communities were dressed in military fatigue and armed with



sophisticated weapons.

“They came around 10pm and started shooting sporadically, killing people and razing houses and hurts in the communities.

“People ran for their lives but many, especially women and children, could not escape the rage of the assailants. While some were butchered, several others were gunned down in cold blood – including two children of a Makurdi-based pastor who traveled home for holidays.

“After the attack, the invaders as usual retreated. It is a sorry sight in the communities, scores sustained injuries, many of the houses are still burning as I speak with you.

“The invaders also looted the valuables and food of their helpless victims.”

The Benue State Government, in a statement through the Chief Press Secretary, CPS, to the Governor, Mr. Terver Akase confirmed the attack.

The statement read in part, “I can confirm that herdsmen last night and earlier today invaded Saghev Ward of Guma Local Government Area, killing many innocent persons.

“10 corpses have so far been recovered with many still missing and scores injured. The armed herdsmen also burnt numerous houses, shops and other property in the area.

“This mindless attack was unprovoked, and we urge security agencies to arrest the herdsmen behind the killings for prosecution.”

Meanwhile, the Mdzough U Tiv, MUT, a socio-cultural organisation of Tiv speaking people in the country has again alleged that the governor of a neighbouring state,

had provided a safe haven for militant herdsmen from where they launch attacks on defenseless Tiv indigenes of both Nasarawa and Benue States.

In a statement signed by the President General of MUT, Chief Edward Ujege, and the Secretary General, Dr. Boniface Ukende, lamented that the said governor had done nothing to check the relentless attacks.

The statement read, “MUT can authoritatively reveal that between 15th, 19th of April 2018, the herdsmen invaded Tiv villages in Awe, Obi, Keana, Dome and Lafia Local Government Areas of Nasarawa State and killed over 75 Tiv people and ransacked villages and displaced over 100,000 Tiv people.

“It can be recalled that in January, 2018, it was made public that herdsmen were harbored in TUNGA settlement in Awe Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. This was later confirmed by security agents when their kingpin was arrested in Tunga.

“Currently we are informed that the herdsmen that recently attacked and killed over 75 Tiv people are accommodated in Adudu in Obi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. They have made Adudu their second base from where they spring to unleash terror on defenseless indigenous Tiv people of Nasarawa and Benue States.

“In consequence therefore, the herdsmen have taken over and occupied Tiv houses unchecked and where they cannot for want of number they set such abandoned properties ablaze.

“We call on all well meaning Nigerians, the National Assembly, National Human Rights Commission and International Community to urgently wade into this issue.”

Meanwhile there were conflicting accounts on the murder of six persons in Otukpo local government at the weekend.



A source in the town allegedly linked the crisis leading to the murder of the victims to the caucus meeting of the All Progressives Congress, APC, Benue South, held in the town. Another account linked the killings to a rival bloody cult fight which also left scores injured.

In a statement exonerating his party from the crisis, the APC Director of Publicity, Peter Apeh, told Sunday Vanguard on phone that there were no fracas, not to talk of killing during the caucus meeting of the party in Benue South last Friday contrary to speculations that the incumbent state chairman, Abba Yaro, brought in thugs to manhandle his political opponents.

Apeh, however, alleged that “The thing was said to have started from Thursday. I heard that boys, rival cult boys were moving from street to street killing people. It was not like it happened at the venue of our meeting.

“I also heard rumours that it was the state chairman that instigated it. How can somebody that has been endorsed instigate such? Abba Yaro is such a man that will not stoop low to indulge in such activity. If there was anything of such, it might have been caused by the an aspirant.”

When contacted, the Benue state Police Public Relations Officer, Assistant Superintendent, ASP, Moses Yamu, said he was yet to get details of the incidents.

### 30 killed again in Zamfara

The eye witness to the Zamfara massacre said, the gunmen, in turn went and mobilised more gang members and returned in multitude to carry out the attack which left about 30 dead and many others injured in the two communities.

The Maru Local Government Council Chairman, Alhaji Salisu Dangulbi, and the Police Public Relations Officer in the state, DSP Mohammed Shehu, both confirmed the killings.



According to them, many of the villagers deserted their homes for fear of further attacks which has now become the modus operandi of the gunmen.

The duo said, with the presence of security personnel now in the area however, many of the villagers have started to return home.

The PPRO further explained that units of mobile police working with the military and other security agents were immediately mobilised to the affected areas, adding that peace and normalcy have since been restored.

The police spokesman, however, said that the actual number of those killed was still being worked on and “until this is done, I cannot give you actual figure at the moment”. (NAN)

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