

19 killed in fresh Benue assault

Similarly, no fewer than 19 persons, including women and children, were again killed by suspected herdsmen in some communities in Gwer West Local Government Area of Benue State.

Some of the communities attacked include Tse Amgbem, Udam near Aondoana, and Agbanu Seghev/Ukuse all in Gwer West LGA.

An indigene, who claimed to have escaped the attack, Terna Abende, said the attackers came through Akpachi in Otukpo Local Government Area to attack Tse Amgbem.

He said: "At about 5am on Monday (yesterday), the attackers stormed Tse Amgbem and Udam near the Aondoana community and killed several people and several others were injured. The attackers who are suspected to be herdsmen, also burnt down houses."

Vanguard gathered that the suspected herdsmen had earlier on Sunday ambushed some motorcyclists in separate areas on Naka Nagi Agagbe and Naka/Makurdi roads, and killed six persons.

A source in Gwer West LGA told Vanguard that the herdsmen had taken over seven wards of the council, including Sengev, Gaagev/Tongev, Saghev/Ukusu, Tough, Ateer/ Ijaha, Gaambe Ushin, and Mbachon Avihijme.

Confirming the attacks, Chairman of Gwer West LGA, Mrs Grace Igbabon, said 19 persons were killed in three separate attacks in the council area between Sunday and Monday.

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Her words: "We had about six persons yesterday (Sunday) and 13 people today (Monday).

"I was told that the attackers were suspected herdsmen. They attacked Mbamodu community and killed 13 people, while several others were injured. The attackers burnt down several houses in the community.

"Other incidents happened on Sunday at the other side of Mbachon, some motorcyclists were riding on the road and they saw a man in military uniform who flagged them down.

“I was told that in the process of slowing down, another set of people who possibly had laid ambush came out from the bush and shot at them. Four of them died and one later escaped.

“Also along Naka/Makurdi Road on Sunday, they (suspected herdsmen) killed two others.

Police Public Relations Officer, Benue State command, DSP Catherine Anene, said she only heard about the attack on some communities near Aondoana in the local government but had no details.

Abductors of Kogi LG chair demand N100m ransom

Meanwhile, abductors of Yagba West Local government chairman in Kogi State, Mr. Pius Kolawole, are asking for N100 million ransom to release him.

Vanguard gathered that the abductors late Sunday night, called the secretary to the local government and one of his family members to lay down their demands.

The kidnappers were also said to have promised to call back by 10:00am yesterday to continue the negotiation.

The source said the kidnappers did not call until noon yesterday, adding that they (kidnappers) also contacted the Kogi State Chairman, Association of Local Government of Nigeria, ALGON, Mr. Taofik Isah, who doubles as chairman of Ijumu Local Government Area.

It was gathered that the family of the kidnapped LG boss and state chapter of ALGON had now agreed that only the ALGON chairman should continue with the negotiation with the kidnappers.

Kolawole was kidnapped on Saturday evening on his way from Ilorin, Kwara State capital, to his home town of Egbe, the border town between Kogi and Kwara states.

The attack claimed the life of the State Commissioner for Pensions Board, Mr. Solomon Adebayo, popularly called Akeweje who was in the same vehicle with the chairman.

However, the kidnappers did not touch the four-year-old son of late Akeweje who was in the vehicle at the time of attack.

While the police orderly to the chairman took to his heels, the driver of the vehicle was badly wounded and shot at by the abductors. He only regained consciousness at Egbe Hospital the following day.

News of the confirmation that the council chairman was still alive in the hands of his abductors, elicited joy as many of the governor's appointees took to social media, singing songs of joy.