

Saturday NEWS

Bloodbath: 20 killed in Benue villages as herders invade communities in two LGAs

- *Invaders sack locals, occupy four Council Wards in Kwande LGA*
- *Men killed in Gwer West community, women and children asked to leave*
- *They're taking over our ancestral land, LG Chairman cry out*

By Peter Duru, Makurdi

At least 20 persons have been reportedly killed in what appeared another coordinated attack on Benue communities in Waya, Jato-Aka, Turan and villages in Mbabuande and Mbapa Council Wards of Kwande and Gwer West Local Areas of the state respectively.

It was gathered from a source in the Turan area that the victims of the Waya attack were killed in their farms by the bandits who invaded the community at about 11am on Thursday.

"When they came into our community our people were in their farms to prepare for the cropping season since it started raining few days back.

"It was while in the farm that the herdsman stormed our village and all those they caught up with in the farms were killed while the lucky ones escaped with serious injuries.

"So far eight mutilated bodies of the victims have been recovered including those of children and a family of four who were murdered in cold.

"The bodies recovered includes those of Gbaeren Orsoo, Terdoo Tsega, Bemdoo Tsega, Abacha Tsega, Terkaa Tsega, Aondoaseer Tyov, Iorhen Atim and Aondowase Igba while the search for more bodies is still ongoing because several persons are still missing and people are fleeing their homes and villages," he



From left: Newly elected chairman of Borno Correspondents' Chapel, NUJ, Mr Inusa Ndahi Marama and the Theatre Commander, 'Operation Hadin Kai', Major General Christopher Musa during a courtesy call to the Theatre Command yesterday.

said.

Contacted, the Chairman of Kwande LGA, Mrs. Tantor Chianson who confirmed the killings said "the eight corpses so far recovered have been taken to the mortuary in Jato-Aka.

"The herdsman are still around so I have reported the matter to the Security Adviser to the Governor and the troops of Operation Whirl Stroke, OPWS, who are in the bush searching for more corpses.

"This is sad, my people went to the farm on Thursday because it rained and they were there to prepare the land for planting, unfortunately they were ambushed and killed in their respective farms at Waya community close to Anwase.

"The herdsman had come few days ago and set a lot of houses ablaze. They also kidnap some other persons, took away their motorcycles and later brought their mutilated bodies and dumped them.

"All what they are doing is just to kill and chase our people away and take over our ancestral homes. As I speak with you some of our Council Wards are under siege; they include Mbachura, Kumakwagh, Yaav Moon and Mbaikyur.

"They have sustained the attacks in the last three months and we have lost over 50 persons in the attacks and we are now home to over 3,500 Internally Displaced Persons, IDPs," she added.

Meanwhile 12 persons were also reportedly killed by the marauders who invaded Tse Ibe, Tse Katsa, Tse Melayongu and Mbaakpam in Mbapa Council Ward as well as Tse Agungu Unger in Mbabuande Council Ward all of Gwer West LGA.

It was gathered from an indigene of the area, who narrowly escaped with his life, that nine persons were killed in Mbapa Council Ward while three others were murdered in Mbabuande Council Ward of the LGA.

According to the source who said he lost his elder brother in the attack, the armed herdsman stormed Tse Ibe village on motorcycles at about 4pm on Thursday.