

## Alia imposes 24-hr curfew as irate youths protest, raze property over bandits' killings



Gov. Alia

**By Peter Duru, Makurdi**

**Governor Hyacinth Alia of Benue state has imposed 24 hours curfew on Ukum Local Government Area, LGA, of the state.**

**The lockdown followed the Tuesday night attack on on Ayati community in Borikyo Council Ward of the LGA by suspected armed bandits that claimed about 11 lives and left scores with severe injuries.**

**The attack sparked angry protests by the youths of the area at Sankera, the headquarters of Ukum LGA, who took over the Sankera -Ayati-Sai road and made**

headquarters of Ukum LGA, who took over the Sankera -Ayat-Sai road and made bonfires on the highway.

A source in the area who spoke on condition of anonymity said “The angry youths who sang war songs matched through the streets to protest the endless attacks.

“They stormed the Ukum Local Government Council Secretariat to confront the Caretaker Chairman and when they did not see him they initially vandalised the building.

“And while that was going on another group also vandalised the Legislative House of the LGA and set the buildings on fire.

“As we speak there is a total breakdown of law and order in Sankera and people do not feel safe anymore. Business owners have locked up their premises and everyone is fleeing for his or her life.

“Though Police and military personnel are moving in to quell the protest, the youths are resisting the intervention.”

Meanwhile, in a bid to check an escalation of the crisis, Governor Hyacinth Alia through his Deputy, Dr. Sam Ode has imposed a 24-hour curfew on the LGA which would run from dusk to dawn after 24 hours.

In his speech, the Governor drew the attention of the people at home and in the diaspora, and all stakeholders as well as security agencies to the situation saying “This morning being July 3, 2024, the Government of Benue State was surprised with grave security situation in Ukum LGA of the State which has lead to the breakdown of law and order, leading to wanton destruction of government property and threats to lives.

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**“Arising from this situation and the need to protect the lives and property of all Benue citizens especially those who are in the Ukum LGA and Sankera general area, the Governor of Benue State Rev. Fr. Hyacinth Alia whom I have the honour to represent at this press briefing has directed that with effect from 3 pm today being July 3, 2024, there will be a curfew in and around Ukum for 24 hours, today 3 pm to tomorrow 3pm.”**

**The Governor sued for calm assuring that security personnel had been deployed to the LGA and the entire Sankera axis of the state to maintain law and order and to ensure the return of normalcy to that part of the state.**