

Benue: Bandits kill over 30 in fresh Ukum LG attack

Police confirm death of 2 officers

By Peter Duru, Makurdi

At least 30 persons were feared dead in a late night attack by suspected local bandits supported by armed herdsmen, on Ayati community in Ukum Local Government Area, LGA, of Benue state.

It was gathered that the marauders stormed the community Thursday night at about 11:30pm when the people had go to bed and killed most of the victims in their homes while some of those that managed to escape were chased into the bush and murdered.

According to the source, the local bandits teamed up with armed herdsmen in the attack that lasted about an hour.

Confirming the development, a former governorship aspirant from the area, Mr. Shima Ayati said: "We were told that some bandits received money from herdsmen and showed them land belonging to the people in two Council Wards for grazing.

"And as they commenced grazing crisis ensued between the herdsmen and the farmers who cried out to the government.

And the government dispatched the state security outfit who came and chased the herdsmen away and burnt their tents which got them angry.

"They claimed that the bandits sold the land to them and they went and met the bandits. So the herdsmen and bandits went to the village and carried out a massacre.

"As of this morning over 30 corpses were gathered and they are still searching.

"After burning and scattering the tents of the herdsmen the security outfit left; instead of sleeping there to guard the village."

Confirming the develop-

ment in a text, the Police Public Relations Officer, Superintendent, SP, Catherine Anene said "I'm aware there was an attack and I'm waiting for briefing from officers on ground please."

Police confirm death of 2 officers in Ayati attack in Benue

Meanwhile, the State Police Command has confirmed the death of two Police personnel in the attack. "The Command in a statement by its Public Relations Officer, Superintendent, SP, Catherine Anene said it recorded 15 deaths in the attack. "Part of the statement read, "on August 8, 2024 at about 4:30pm while normal daily activities were going on in Ayati village, Ukum LGA of Benue state, a large number of armed bandits invaded the village and started shooting sporadically at members of the community. "Police officers with in the community responded immediately and were able to repel the bandits. However, 15 people had already sustained gunshot injuries from the attack and were confirmed dead on arrival at the hospital. "The unfortunate incident also claimed the lives of two police officers who were among the team that responded to the distress call. Corpses have been deposited at General Hospital Ukum and investigation is ongoing. "The Commissioner of Police, CP, Hassan Yabanet visited Ayati for on the spot assessment of the situation. While commiserating with families of the deceased, he assured them of his commitment to fight criminals in the area. "He also commended officers for their response and encouraged them not to give up on the operation as more teams have been sent to the area for

a wider coverage and better engagement of bandits. "Meanwhile Governor Hyacinth Alia has expressed deep sadness over the news of another unprovoked attack on the community. "The Governor in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Tersoo Kula strongly condemned "the attack on unarmed innocent citizens of Benue State by armed bandits, expressing worry that such heinous act has continued in the state despite strong security presence and the regular dialogue sessions his adminis-

tration has been holding with stakeholders, and traditional rulers seeking the return of peace in Sankera. "He, however, makes a firm determination to continue to use lawful procedures to protect Benue people, particularly Ukum which has been on the front line of attacks lately. "The Governor calls on security personnel to improve their surveillance and also ensure that vulnerable communities are not left unguarded while the government awaits the Judicial Commission of Inquiry to bring out its findings.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

RENUNCIATION OF THE MEMBERSHIP OF KUPA IN NEO BLACK MOVEMENT

I, FELIX EDORE KUPA, do hereby write to formally renounce my membership of the Neo Black Movement of Africa (NBMA), effective immediately.

After careful consideration and reflection on some of the issues that have become evident that the stigma/odium associated with the Neo Black Movement in the view of the general public is detrimental to my personal and professional life as a High Chief in Ughievwen Kingdom of Ughelli South I.

Having served as the National President of the Neo Black Movement, I have firsthand the positive impact the organization (NBMA) has had on the oppression, promoting unity amongst people and global peace. However, the public undermines these noble goals and jeopardizes the future of the organization.

Therefore, I hereby formally renounce my membership of the Neo Black Movement and request that my name be removed from all official records of the organization. Also, I request that any communication or association with a member of the Movement be ceased forthwith.

I appreciate the opportunities and experiences gained during my tenure in the Movement continued success in its endeavors.

It is important to state that I reserve the right to take legal action against anyone who falsely identifies me as a member of the Neo Black Movement.