

Gunmen kill eight in Plateau, Kogi bans festival after deadly violence

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Bandits

No fewer than eight people have been killed and 10 others injured after gunmen attacked Gwon-Ajang village in Foron District of Barkin Ladi Local Government Area of [Plateau State](#).

Residents said the attack occurred at about 10:00 p.m. on Sunday when the assailants opened fire on villagers gathered for a birthday celebration.

Witnesses said the attackers shot indiscriminately, forcing residents to flee for safety as panic spread across the community.

The National Publicity Secretary of the Berom Youth Moulders Association (BYM), Rwang Tengwong, confirmed the incident in a statement yesterday, adding that those injured were receiving treatment in the hospital.

A resident, Bishop Iliya, said the victims had gathered for a social event when the gunmen struck.

“The people were gathered for a birthday celebration when the gunmen arrived and started shooting at everything in sight. It is a painful and unfortunate situation for our community,” he said.

Iliya lamented the recurring attacks on communities in Plateau State and called for stronger [security measures](#) to protect residents.

Security personnel were reportedly deployed to the area following the attack, while the BYM urged security agencies to take decisive action to apprehend those responsible.

The latest incident adds to a growing list of attacks recorded across Plateau State in recent weeks.

Meanwhile, the Kogi State Government has banned the Echane cultural festival in Ogaminana, Adavi Local Government Area, following the death of two persons during violence that erupted at the event.

The victims were reportedly hit by stray bullets after the festival degenerated into a gun duel in the community.

According to eyewitnesses, the crisis began when off-duty soldiers who had returned home to participate in the festivities allegedly incited violence in retaliation after some of their colleagues were reportedly beaten by a masquerade in Inorere, Ogaminana, a few days earlier.

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“Despite immediate intervention by the Adavi Peace Committee and the Local Cultural Union to de-escalate the situation and appease the aggrieved personnel, all mediation efforts failed,” an eyewitness said.

The witness added that the soldiers allegedly called for reinforcements from their operational base in Okene and that, upon arrival, the troops began firing sporadically into the air.

“This indiscriminate shooting resulted in casualties among innocent bystanders. A young POS attendant, Omeiza, was struck by a stray bullet while inside his kiosk. He was later confirmed dead. A second victim was struck by gunfire while sitting peacefully inside his room,” the eyewitness added.

In response to the violence, the Kogi State Government announced the suspension of the Echane Festival across Ebiraland.

The government said the decision followed credible intelligence reports indicating that activities associated with the festival could threaten public peace, safety and security and potentially lead to a breakdown of law and order in parts of

Kogi Central Senatorial District.

Also, armed bandits invaded Ayegunle Bunu community in Kabba-Bunu Local Government Area of Kogi State, killing one person and abducting more than 30 residents and travellers.

The Guardian learnt that the gunmen stormed the community at about 2:25 a.m., killing a resident whose identity had yet to be confirmed at press time.

Sources said the attackers abducted a man, his wife and several other residents at gunpoint, while also laying an ambush on a nearby highway where they intercepted commercial vehicles and kidnapped passengers.

At press time, the exact number of persons abducted during the attack remained unclear.

The attack also left several residents injured.

Efforts to obtain confirmation from the Kogi State Police Command were unsuccessful, as the Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Oyiza Saliu, could not be reached on the telephone at press time.