

Gunmen kill five, injure three in Plateau community

Gov warns community leaders

Isaac Shobayo | Jos

FIVE persons, including children, have been killed and three others injured by gunmen in Nche Shwye Rishi community, Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau State. The attack occurred on Thursday evening.

According to a statement by the National Publicity Secretary of the Irigwe Development Association (IDA), Mr. Sam Jugo, the assailants struck around 9:45 p.m., just as most residents were preparing to go to bed.

The gunmen reportedly targeted a family near ECWA Church, Tudun Wada, Miangô, killing five members and shooting three others as they tried to flee.

Those killed were identified as Nancy Monday, Nuhu Isaiyah, Henry Dah, Zongo Sun-

day, and Tarma Monday. Their remains have been deposited at the mortuary.

The association expressed concern over why security agents in the area have been unable to apprehend the perpetrators, while others are routinely arrested for alleged wrongdoing.

It also recalled that a Mr. Abbas Musa was killed at gunpoint in his home earlier this week, suggesting that the attacks may resemble hits carried out by hired assailants targeting the Irigwe nation.

"Meantime, it remains to be seen whether authorities will finally break the jinx that has long haunted Irigwe land by arresting the killers of Abbas Musa and the latest five victims," the statement said.

IDA's leadership appealed to residents to resist taking the law into their own hands and urged them to remain

law-abiding despite the unprovoked attacks.

Efforts to reach the spokesman of the Plateau State Police Command, SP Alfred Alabo, for official confirmation were unsuccessful at the time of filing this report.

Meanwhile, the state governor, Caleb Mutfwang, has issued a warning to community leaders and groups, declaring that any further illegal road blockages or attacks on innocent travellers will not be tolerated.

He threatened that community leaders would be held responsible for any violations.

The governor made the statement on Friday while briefing journalists at the end of an expanded State Security Council meeting at the Government House in Jos.

The meeting reviewed the recent surge of violence, including attacks by gunmen

on rural communities and subsequent reprisal incidents that claimed lives along major highways.

Mutfwang expressed sadness over the wave of killings which included attacks on travellers, the mining disaster in Zurak community in Wase Local Government Area, and assaults in Dorowa Babuje and Jong village in Barakin-Ladi Local Government Area.

"Anybody henceforth who blocks the highway without authorisation will not be tolerated. We will ensure that highways and roads remain accessible to all citizens. Only authorised law enforcement agencies are allowed to block roads.

"Anyone passing through any community and put in harm's way will be the responsibility of the community leadership. We will not accept it any longer," the governor said.

He stressed that the recent victims on the highways were "innocent" and had no links to any crime, adding that every life in Plateau is sacred.

He assured that the government would uphold the rule of law and would not allow individuals to take justice into their own hands.

Mutfwang also appealed to youths, elders, and community leaders to exercise restraint and demonstrate leadership. He urged families of victims not to be provoked into retaliatory actions that could escalate the situation.

Dismissing narratives portraying Plateau's roads as unsafe, the governor called them "mischief" intended to undermine the state's image.

He insisted that the recent incidents are isolated and that Plateau remains a peaceful state with potential for tourism.

In a related development,

the governor warned against the misuse of social media to incite violence or hatred, vowing that authorities would pursue "purveyors of misinformation" spreading false claims to destabilise the state.

The Commissioner of Police, Bassey Ewah, corroborated the governor's briefing, confirming ongoing intelligence-led operations, combined security shows of force, and raids to apprehend perpetrators.

He dismissed circulating reports of additional corpses as unfounded, emphasising that Plateau remains calm and safe for residents and visitors.

Security officials assured that both kinetic and non-kinetic measures would be intensified to sustain the relative peace enjoyed in recent months and prevent a recurrence, especially ahead of the farming season.