

# Plateau conducts mass burial for 11 bandit attack victims

16th October 2025



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A total of 11 persons killed in a fresh attack by bandits in Plateau State were on Wednesday buried in the Barkin Ladi community amidst wailings by families and loved ones.

Grieving mourners who attended the mass burial said the attack, which occurred on Tuesday night, targeted Rachas village in Heipang District and Rawuru village in Fan District, both in Barkin Ladi Local Government Area of the state.

One of the mourners and President of the Berom Youth Moulders Association, Solomon Dalyop, told *The PUNCH* in Jos on Wednesday that the attackers, identified as Fulani militia, launched simultaneous assaults on the two villages, killing five minors and six adults.

He listed the victims as Mr. Chollom Danjuma (37), Mr. Sunday Gyang (27), Mr. Kefas Dung (28), Solomon Dung (40), Mrs. Christy Dung (3), Marvellous Pam (9), Mr. Davou Manam (25), Japheth Solomon (7), Mancha Monday (7), Nyam Chollom (5), and Maryann Mancha (10).

In a statement issued after the mass burial, which he jointly signed with the association's secretary, Bature Iliya Adazaram, the BYM condemned the killings, describing them as part of a renewed wave of coordinated attacks that had plunged communities in Barkin Ladi and Riyom Local Government Areas into another round of inhumanity.

“The Berom Youth Movement is gravely saddened over the renewed wave of coordinated attacks that have, once again, plunged communities in Barkin Ladi and Riyom Local Government Areas into another round of inhumanity of armed Fulani militancy, banditry, and terrorism,” the statement read.

The association called on the Nigerian Army and other security agencies to act with fairness, professionalism, and neutrality to restore public confidence and ensure that justice is done.

The BYM also reiterated its position that cattle grazing should be restricted in all villages and communities—particularly in areas where there are no Fulani settlements—to prevent further attacks.

“Sadly, within one week, 12 persons have been killed in Fan, 11 in Heipang, and two in Wereng, marking one of the darkest weeks in recent memory for the Berom Nation.

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“The Berom Youth Moulders Association condemns these barbaric and unprovoked attacks in the strongest terms and calls for urgent government intervention to prevent further bloodshed.

“The association also wishes to reiterate its position that cattle grazing should be restricted in all our villages and communities, especially where there are no Fulani settlements, since grazing has outright been abused by becoming

a ploy and strategy to consistently hide terrorist elements and serve as a mischievous means to attack and kill at will.”

The statement warned that if the security agencies and government at all levels failed to rise to their statutory responsibilities, the people might have no option but to resort to self-defence, as constitutionally provided, to restore peace in Plateau and Nigeria at large.

“The BYM equally wishes to inform the public that cattle belonging to native inhabitants have frequently been rustled on several occasions, yet no one cares to publicise such incidents. We therefore call on those affected cattle owners whose livestock were rustled last night—just as gestures of sympathy have always been extended to the Fulani even when there’s no proof—to also have their cases given similar attention.

“Having lost 25 persons within seven days, we make bold to state that any security meeting involving killer Fulani will not have our presence, since such meetings have recently proven to be strategies for ambush and subsequent attacks on our villages and communities.

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“We also wish to emphatically assert that the propaganda machinery of the killer Fulani, using cattle as cover to terrorise peace-loving people of Plateau, especially in Berom land, must be stopped. We call for an outright ban on open grazing on our lands, as falsehoods and fabricated claims of cattle rustling cannot justify the taking of human life, the forceful takeover of lands through displacement, or the alarming destruction of farmlands aimed at economically weakening and impoverishing our agrarian people. The sanctity of human life remains supreme under the Nigerian Constitution and international law.

“The BYM also cautions that the gentility and peaceful disposition of the Plateau people should not be misconstrued as weakness. The Association therefore demands that the security agencies discharge their statutory duties dispassionately—with equity, justice, and integrity—while ensuring that perpetrators of these crimes are brought to justice without bias or favour.

“The BYM stands in solidarity with all affected families and communities, offering its deepest condolences to those who have lost loved ones. We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to pursuing justice, truth, and equality, and insist that true peace can only be achieved when built on the foundation of justice, equity, and fairness.”