

METRO

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Death toll in Plateau attacks hits 33 as protest halts burial



By Golok Nanmwa

Jos—Tension gripped Angwan Rukuba community, in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State, yesterday, as the death toll from the Palm Sunday attack rose to 33.

Angry women and youths had staged a protest that disrupted the mass burial of victims at the ECWA Church.

This came as gunmen ambushed and killed a 300-level university student in Dum Village, Bachi District of Riyom Local Government Area of the state.

Meanwhile, Chairman of Barkin Ladi Local Government Area of the state, Stephen Pwajok, and the member representing Barkin Ladi Constituency in the Plateau State House of Assembly, Dickson Chollom, have demanded that the suspect arrested over the deadly attack on Pommwol village in Barkin Ladi be thoroughly investigated and made to face the full wrath of the law.

The solemn funeral service turned chaotic when protesters gathered outside the church auditorium, demanding the immediate release of three youths arrested by the military in connection with the incident.

Chief of Staff to the Plateau State Governor, Jeremiah Satmak, who represented the government, confirmed the rise in casualties.

He said some victims died in hospital after the initial toll stood at 28.

“Government is working tirelessly to unravel the motive behind these killings and bring an end to the violence on the Plateau.

“This attack was meant to break our unity, but it will not succeed,” Satmak said.

He assured bereaved families that efforts were ongoing to identify the perpetrators and bring them to justice, while urging residents to remain vigilant and prayerful.

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Satmak also announced that the three youths arrested in connection with the attack had been released.

Chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN, Plateau State chapter, Rev. Gomwalk Duncan, stressed that sustainable peace could only be achieved

through justice.

“There can be no peace without justice. Government must ensure that justice is served for lasting peace to return,” he said.

Earlier, women and youths carrying placards vowed not to allow the burial to proceed until the arrested youths were freed.

They alleged the youths were unjustly picked up while merely holding sticks, insisting the real attackers remained at large.

The protest heightened tension in the area, reflecting residents’ growing frustration over recurring violence and perceived delays in justice.