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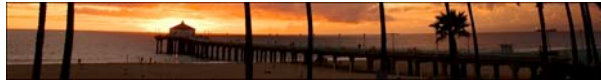
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**Nigeria: 20 Killed As Jos Burns Again**

Raymond Gukas

18 March 2010

Jos — Fulani insurgents engaged in another round of killings yesterday, when they hacked down 20 women and children after an early morning invading a village in Riyom local government area of Plateau State.

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This was coming two days after a similar attack was carried out in Fan village of Barkin Ladi local government area of the state with the murder of a 55-year old woman, Mrs. Hanatu Philip.

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Daily Champion gathered that two persons survived the attack. Chairman of the council area, Prince Simon Mwatkon who confirmed the incident, said he made contacts with both the police and army, but help only came after the perpetrators had concluded their mission.

An eyewitness said the attackers were accompanied by men in the camouflage used by the special presidential military task force drafted to the state in the wake of the January 17 crisis.

It would be recalled that Riyom was the council area that a truck conveying some weapons was intercepted by security men last Saturday.

Member representing Riyom constituency, Hon. Emmanuel D. Jugul said the constant attacks on his constituency had created serious fears as farmers in the area are not even celebrating the coming of the cropping season.

No official reaction has been made by security agencies at the time of filing this report. Contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) Mohammed Lerema said he could not comment on the issue since it involves join security with the military, arguing that their own role was complementary.

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On his part, Plateau State commissioner for information and communication, Gregory Yenlong described the incident as sad and a serious security threat to the people of the state.

He said it was unfortunate that lives were being lost to hoodlums in the state. He said: "The people in the state should compliment the effort of the security personnel by keeping vigil by themselves so as to check mate the activities of this Fulani militia in the state.

Yenlong urged the people of the state to be security conscious and beef up security in their domain as this will go along way to address this problem in the state.

His warning came just as the Speaker of House of Representatives, Dimeji Bankole, called on the Plateau State and the federal governments to punish those behind the incessant killings in the state.

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Bankole spoke in Jos on Tuesday when he led a delegation from the House to the state governor, Jonah Jang over the recent attacks on some villages.

He said: "Our view is that until someone is punished, there may not be a deterrent to some of these killings that are happening; it is painfully obvious.

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"If we have killings in a particular area, when normalcy returns, those people in that community know who killed who. And if no one is punished, someone will kill somebody again and it will continue to go on."

Bankole regretted that none of the recommendations of the various commissions of inquiry and investigative panels on the crises in the state had been implemented nor someone punished.

He said they did not see the crises as a Plateau problem and assured that the House would support the state government in its quest for a lasting solution. He challenged the state government to move very fast and reach out to its people.

"This issue concerns loss of lives of women, children, men who have no idea whatsoever of what truly the religious, ethnic and political calculations that are bringing about these undesired outcome are.

"I am not here to make political statements but to give support to government and people of Plateau and to offer ourselves in National Assembly to proffer solution.

"We are ready to give you our full support. Our advice to you is to think along political, ethnic and religious lines because you cannot run away from them. Those are the facts," he said.

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Meanwhile, the Bauchi State government said has uncovered a plot to replicate the Jos crisis in the state on March 26.

"The aim of the plan is to ensure that the chaos that recently engulfed Jos is replicated here in Bauchi," the government stated in a statement signed by the Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Alhaji Ahmed Dandija.

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It explained that part of the plot was to use some retired soldiers to attack the temporary camps established by the state government where the internally displaced persons from the Jos crisis are being sheltered.

"They believe that if Jos sneezes, then Bauchi must catch cold," the government said.

It asked all law abiding citizens of the state not to be used to cause trouble and wanton destruction of lives and property of innocent people "for selfish interest of some callous individuals."

"Government is determined to use all the resources at its disposal to ensure the maintenance of peace, law and order in the state.

"The unfortunate crisis that took place in Jos will never be allowed to be replicated in Bauchi," it warned.

The statement advised the people to continue with their normal businesses, adding that government "is in full control of the situation."

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