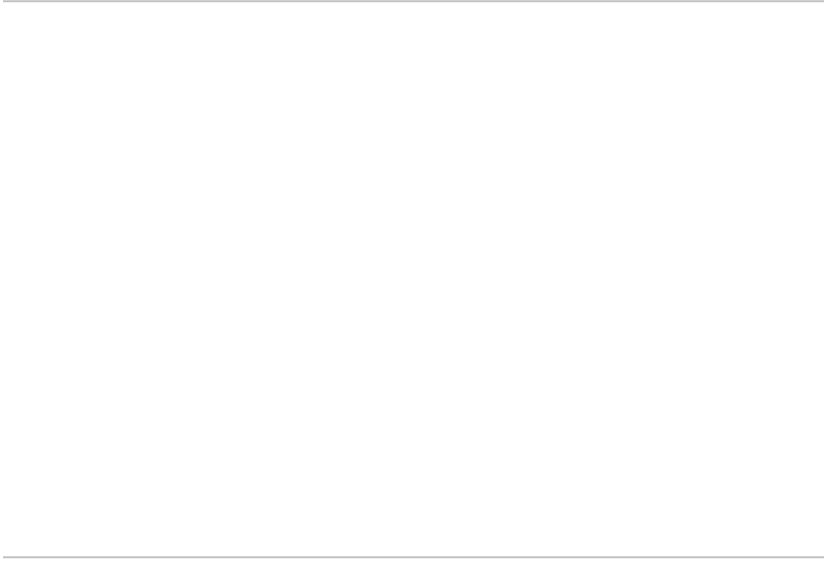


Unrest: FG, Governors, Religious Leaders Move To Save Plateau



One of the burnt trucks at Gada Biyu when hoodlums blocked the road and killed two people in retaliation to an attack in Bassa almost some weeks ago



By **Ado Abubakar Musa, Jos**

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A delegation of the federal government, state governors and religious leaders yesterday visited Jos, Plateau State to engage various stakeholders with a view to finding a lasting solution to the communal crisis in the state.

The delegation included the Co-Chairmen of the Nigerian Inter-Religious Council (NIREC), Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Saad Abubakar and Rev. Dr. Samson Ayokunle, who is also President of the Christian Association of Nigeria, (CAN); Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Boss Mustapha; Chairman of the Nigerian Governors Forum, Kayode Fayemi; Governors of Sokoto and Niger States, Aminu Tambuwal and Abubakar Sani Bello respectively.

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The Co-Chairman of NIREC, Rev. Dr. Samson Oyakunle said they were in Plateau in response to the recent attacks that claimed lives and properties.

He said NIREC has followed with regret, the toxic narratives emanating from some religious and political leaders, who, instead of calming down tension, have resorted to heightening it.

He said NIREC has resolved to hand over such persons to security agencies for prosecution.

The Sultan of Sokoto said the visit was part of their engagement towards promoting peace in Nigeria in fulfilment of their mandate and resolutions at the last quarterly meeting which was held in Abuja.

He, however, said Plateau State still remained a home of peace with attraction to people of diverse backgrounds, who generally want to live together.

The problem, he said, was the inability to halt impunity and punish criminals who use religion, ethnicity and politics to cause havoc.

Chairman of the Nigerian Governors Forum, Dr. Kayode Fayemi, said the state governors were in solidarity with their colleague, Governor Simon Bako Lalong, who has put in a lot of efforts and resources to build structures for peaceful coexistence in the state as well as supported peace and reconciliation in various parts of the country.

He said the governors would do everything possible to support him in ensuring that peace is sustained on the Plateau, which is reputed for its hospitality and attraction to people from all backgrounds.

Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Boss Mustapha, who represented President Muhammadu Buhari at the engagement, said the federal government was concerned about the attacks in Plateau and has continued to support security agencies and the state government in putting an end to the situation.

He urged the residents to tolerate and love one another and fish out criminals among them by reporting them to security agencies.

He also assured that the federal government would do its best to support the state government to respond to the humanitarian needs of the internally displaced persons.

Governor Lalong challenged the people of Plateau State to rise together and unite against those who want to cause divisions and hatred using all avenues including politics.

Ban on protest still in force

The Plateau State Government has warned residents against protest, saying the ban on public procession in the state was still in force.

Reports making the round on social media said there would be protest on Tuesday in Jos in commemoration of the 20 years of killings in the state.

Mr Dan Manjang, the state's Commissioner for Information and Communication, in a statement yesterday, urged residents to comply with the ban, saying security personnel had been notified to enforce the directive.

4 killed in fresh attack

Four persons were killed in fresh attacks on two villages in Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau State.

The first attack occurred on Sunday evening in the Kpachudu community where a herder was beheaded.

The State Chairman of Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), Malam Nura Abdullahi, accused members of Irigwe ethnic group of beheading one Musa Sale, aged 14 and injuring Abdulsalam Nuhu, aged 13 while rearing cattle around the Kpachudu area.

The Irigwe dismissed the allegation as untrue and unfounded.

On Monday morning, three members of the Irigwe ethnic group were killed, in Renwienku community of the same Bassa LGA.

Mr Davidson Malison, spokesman of the Irigwe Development Association (IDA), gave the names of the victims as Gya Evi (60), Sunday Nah (45) and Friday Yakubu (40).

He accused the Fulani of launching the attack but the Fulani group also denied it.

The spokesman for the state Police Command, ASP Ubah Gabriel, confirmed the two attacks.

He said investigation had commenced to fish out the assailants.

"The command is aware of the unfortunate incidents at Kpachudu and Renwienku village in Miango District that led to the death of four persons. More personnel have been deployed to the areas to restore peace. Investigation has since commenced to fish out the perpetrators of the dastardly act."