

Plateau: 30 Gunmen Killed, Soldiers Injured In Clash At Mangu

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Sun, 28 Jan 2024 6:47:06 WAT



Many persons were reportedly killed Saturday when soldiers and gunmen clashed at two villages of Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State.

The incident occurred after Governor Caleb Mutfwang relaxed the 24-hour curfew imposed on the area.

Mutfwang had said that following the improvement of security, the curfew should be from 8am to 4pm.

Sources told our correspondent that about 30 gunmen were killed while some soldiers sustained injuries during the clash at Satguru and Tyop villages.

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A security operative who requested anonymity told Daily Trust on Sunday that, “The incident occurred between 7 to 7:30am when the gunmen came in their numbers and started attacking some communities along Gindri road. In no time, the soldiers were alerted and immediately responded.

“About 30 of the gunmen were killed while more than 50 of them were arrested with guns and ammunition. Four soldiers were equally injured.”

Another source in the area, who also pleaded for anonymity, confirmed the incident to Daily Trust on Sunday, adding that people were still in fear.

The spokesperson of Operation Safe Haven, a multi-security taskforce maintaining peace in the area, is yet to respond to the inquiries by our correspondent at the time of filing this report.

Meanwhile, the Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant-General, Taoreed Lagbaja, yesterday gave troops deployed to Mangu Local Government Area a marching order to end the needless attacks and killings in the area.

The army chief gave the order at Mangu Mini Stadium while addressing the newly deployed troops in the area.

The deployment of the troops followed the recent ethno-religious violence that broke out among the communities of Mangu, where many people were killed and property, including religious centres, destroyed.

Lagbaja instructed the troops to take a decisive action, utilise strategic maneuvers and employ necessary the force to swiftly and effectively end to killings.

The COAS, who expressed sadness over the wanton destruction of lives and property in the area, charged the troops to go after the law breakers.

“Six months ago, I was here and launched a special operation. On December 31, 2023, I came again following the security challenges in some parts of the state. In the last one week, the security situation has deteriorated, so I am here to charge all of you to end these happenings.

“As soldiers, your duty is to go after criminals. Do not spare anyone who constitutes a threat to the peace of this area. Your rules of engagement are clear and you must work within it. Do not take sides because if such is reported, anyone found wanting after investigation won’t be spared.”

Lagbaja also charged the troops to be professional and responsible in the discharge of their duties.

The COAS dismissed the allegation that soldiers were behind the recent killings in the state.

He called on residents of the state to cooperate with and support the military and other security agencies in their bid to address the current security challenges in the state.

He assured that the security personnel deployed to the state would impartially discharge their constitutional responsibility for the sake of peace and unity.

He also expressed the Army Headquarters' readiness to address deployment gaps.

“The Army Headquarters has mobilised special forces across the country to Plateau, and I am here to give a marching order to the troops. Their mission on the Plateau is a serious one,” Lagbaja said.