

NEWS.

15 feared killed in fresh Nasarawa attack

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Category: National Hits: 18 • Print



ANOTHER round of violence yesterday erupted in some parts of Nasarawa State claiming no fewer than 15 lives with more than 52 houses torched and economic trees and farms destroyed.

It was gathered that gunmen, believed to be Fulani mercenaries, stormed Gidan Gambo, an Eggon community in Lafia East Development area of the state, where they shot at targeted homes leaving several people dead with hundreds displaced.

The attackers, who defied the early morning downpour, were said to have been armed with brand new AK 47 rifles, which they used in carrying out their onslaught against the community.

A resident, Isla Nana, who fled the war-torn area to Lafia, the state capital, told The Guardian that he lost his father and two sisters in the attack.

He said: "We were sleeping when all of a sudden we started hearing sounds of gunshots around 4:00 p.m. When we came out, they were already close to our house and I was fortunate to have escaped because it was still dark and raining at the same time. My father and two sisters could not make as the Fulani shot and killed them."

Another victim, who fled the scene of the attack, Abimiku Attah, decried government handling of the crisis, regretting that his home and tailoring shop were burnt down by the attackers who could not spare even animals.

Nasarawa is known to have become synonymous with violence, as ethnic and political crises are regular features in the daily existence of the people with the latest crisis erupting just barely after two weeks of intense fighting between the Eggon ethnic nationality and the Fulani, which left hundreds dead.

Sources alleged that top government functionaries were behind the latest crisis even as the state governor, Tanko Al- Makura, had been fingered for sponsoring his Fulani in-laws to launch attacks on ethnic groups perceived to be an impediment to his re-election bid.

But the state Commissioner for Information and Orientation, Hamza Elayo, debunked the insinuation that government has a hand in the crisis, advising the people of the state to shun violence and embrace peace.

"The spate of violence being witnessed today pre-dates this administration and for anybody to accuse the state and other government functionaries of having a hand in it is the most unfortunate thing to say. We are pleading with our people to shun violence and embrace peace in the interest of the society", Elayo told The Guardian in a telephone interview in Lafia yesterday.

Meanwhile, the state police spokesman, Ismaila Nuuman, confirmed the development but said only one person was killed, adding that he was yet to be briefed about the level of destruction of property.

