

NEWS.

Soldier, 12 Others Killed In Fresh Plateau Attack

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THE relative peace Plateau State has been having for some time now was yesterday shattered when unknown gunmen unleashed an orgy of violence in Lwa, Dum, Rachit and Dyang villages in Bachit District in Riyom Local Government. No fewer than 13 persons, including one soldier, were killed during the mayhem.

It was rumoured before the attack that some gunmen were planning to invade the Riyom communities. The villagers therefore prepared themselves with their vigilance groups to confront them.

The attack however took them by surprise as they were fast asleep when the attackers struck around 2am Friday.

An eyewitness in one of the villages, Ayuba John, said: "Since last week, the terrorists had been pressing hard to attack Jol, a nearby village, but when they could not, they then decided on a surprise attack on these villages at the same time today (yesterday) killing about 12 civilians and one soldier."

When contacted, spokesman of the Special Task Force (STF), Capt. Ikedichi Iweha, confirmed the attack, saying that soldiers were still doing mop-up operations. "A soldier was among the dead. We are still carrying out mop-up operations and have not been able to establish the casualty figure", Capt. Iweha said.

He however said that some foreign nationals were picked up by the taskforce. He said that in all, 82 suspects, mostly Camerounians, Nigeriens and Chadians, were apprehended within Rikkos community in Jos North Local Government area of the state.

"The suspects were arrested within Rikkos community which has been under surveillance due to the high concentration of foreigners there. We don't wake up and just go to an area to arrest people; the area has been under surveillance for a long time and it should have been a joint operation with the Nigeria Immigration Service but there were contending issues so we had to move swiftly to operate alone because of the Independence Day and Sallah celebrations," Iweha revealed.

He said the 82 suspects are in the custody of the STF and are well taken care of pending when the Nigeria Immigration Service will carry out full documentations.

However, residents of the Rikkos community told journalists that some of those arrested are victims of mistaken identity as they are Nigerians.

One Babangida Musa whose relative, Umar Ahmad is among the suspects arrested, said: "Ahmad is a Nigerian from Kaduna State but residing in Jos".

Musa disclosed that 21-year-old Ahmad who owns a provisions shop in Rikkos, was arrested around 2am after he had closed shop and was sleeping at home.