

Four IDPs die in Plateau camps, Zamfara's get federal succour

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• NGO warns of looming epidemic outbreaks

Four of the scores of fresh internally displaced persons (IDPs) thrown up by the recent attacks on the Plateau by suspected herdsmen have died in their camps in the northern senatorial district of the state.



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The first death was recorded in Riyom Mini Depot Camp where its nearly 6000 inmates, 90 per cent of whom are women and children, are battling poor sanitary conditions among others. A 70-year-old Dachollom Bature died here last Sunday during a protracted battle with an undisclosed ailment.

The next day, two persons died in same facility. They were Samson Yohanna, 33, and Gabriel Markus, 35.

It was gathered that the duo passed on after a motorcycle accident within the vicinity of the facility.

According to a camp official, Mrs. Jane Tok, the pair had gone out in search of money to cater for family members when the head-on collision occurred.

She said: “One had gone out to find some money to provide for his family while the other was going out for same, on bikes, and they both crashed just close to the camp.”

Same day, an 82-year old woman, Nandis Ishaku, died at a camp in Ban, Heipang, Barkin Ladi council area after a surveillance helicopter reportedly flew over the centre.

The deceased presumably collapsed at the sound of the aircraft in the wake of the horror she witnessed in Nghar village of the local council where she fled with her family for refuge.

She was, however, believed to be hypertensive and lacked medical care while in the camp.

The situation, according to a community non-governmental Organisation (NGO), Women and Children in Community Development Initiative in Nigeria (WOCCI), could lead to outbreaks of diseases if unchecked.

Its Managing Director, Mrs. Edwina Mang, particularly raised the alarm on the health of women and children who constitute the larger populations in most camps.

“You could see that they don’t have good sanitation facilities, safe drinking water or even good places to sleep. This is already a threat to human health, especially for the children who are most likely to play around carelessly and use their hands to eat without washing. Diarrhea is eminent,” she stated.

Mang, who delivered humanitarian aid to three camps – Geosciences Bukuru, Riyom and Heipang –, enjoined the state and local governments to quickly upgrade the camps to forestall any “medical crisis.”

Already, three cases of diarrhea have been reported at the Riyom facility.

However, the Federal Government has approved the distribution of relief materials worth millions of naira to the 3,500 Zamfara IDPs currently camped at Dansabau village in Kankara council area of Katsina State.

The Director General, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Mustapha Maihaja, disclosed yesterday in Katsina that two trucks of food items, clothing and sleeping mats are to be distributed to the victims.



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He noted that the materials were an initial intervention, adding that more would follow after a thorough assessment of the situation.

Represented by the agency's Director of Orientation, Kayode Fagbemi, the NEMA DG said a separate assessment was also being undertaken to assist victims of the recent rainstorm in the state.



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He disclosed that the agency had visited some of the affected communities while the recent ones in Daura and Mashi councils would be assessed this week.

Maihaja spoke at a joint press briefing with the executive secretaries of Katsina and Zamfara Environment Maintenance Agencies, Dr. Aminu Waziri and Sanusi Mohammed.

