

Bandits kill 10 in Plateau as Police arrest eight suspects

By **Isa Abdulsalami Ahovi, Jos**

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Bandits

Gunmen on Sunday night killed 10 people in Gidan Ado, an Irigwe settlement in Ganawuri Chiefdom of Riyom Local Council of Plateau State. An informant, who pleaded anonymity, said he was pained by the devastating incident allegedly perpetrated by herdsmen.

According to him, when he got information about the killing, he immediately reached out to the Special Task Force (STF) known as Operation Safe Haven (OPSH) of the 3 Armoured Division of the Nigerian Army, Rukuba Barracks of Maxwell Khobe Cantonment, Jos.

The informant said that he contacted them for their immediate intervention to avert further escalation of killings and destruction of property. While sympathising with the Irigwe community, he condemned the senseless and unprovoked violence and killings of people preparing for Christmas Celebration in their own little traditional way.

He urged government authorities particularly the OPSH personnel who are in charge of protecting the people of Plateau State to take swift actions and provide relief for the victims as many of them have been displaced especially women and children.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Director of Information of the 3 Division of the Nigerian Army, Rukuba Barracks Jos, Major Aliyu Danja, did not pick up calls put across to him by The Guardian in Jos.

However, a senior Army Officer who preferred anonymity, confirmed the attack, saying that they had deployed troops to the area and that they were now on top of the situation.

Meanwhile, Plateau State Police Command said eight suspects have been arrested for planning to disrupt the Christmas celebration in the state. The state's commissioner of police, Mr Emmanuel Adesina disclosed this while briefing newsmen and critical stakeholders on the command's preparation for the peaceful celebration of this year's Christmas in the state.

Adesina stressed that the suspects wanted to repeat what happened last year on the Eve of Christmas where scores of Christian faithful were massacred and the celebration became tragic and ended abruptly.

According to him, the case would be transferred to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) for further prosecution of the suspects. The Police Commissioner represented by the Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of CID, Sheikh Adamu, said that the police command did not want the tragedy that happened last year where innocent people were mercilessly killed and property worth millions of naira destroyed to repeat itself this year. He mentioned the affected Local Councils as Barkin-Ladi, Riyom, Bassa, Bokkos and Mangu.

According to him, the police and other security agencies have put a lot of commitments on ground to ensure a hitch free and peaceful Christmas. Apart from restriction of movement on Christmas, Boxing Day and New Year, he said there will be a ban on night grazing of cows and night farming, while all beer parlours are to be closed from 6pm to 6am daily throughout the festivity.

Shedding more light on the issue, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Alfred Alabo said the five local councils will from December 23, to January 3, 2025, observe a curfew from 6:00p.m. to 6:00a.m.

He added that the ban on tricycle operation in Jos North and Jos South remains on December 25, and 26, 2024, as well as January 1, 2025. The total ban on motorcycle (Okada) operation remains enforceable.