

500 Feared Killed In Fresh Jos Mayhem

- Jonathan Orders Immediate Arrest Of Killers
- Attack, Act Of Ethnic Cleansing – *Plateau Govt*

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(With Agency Reports)

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Hauwa villagers to wail as the bodies of elderly women and children littered everywhere among the dead.

Plateau State Governor, Jonah Jang, who raced to the village from his private resi-

ABOUT 500 Berom natives in Dogon-Hauwa village, five kilometres south of Jos,

were massacred on Sunday morning by Fulani herdsman

who raided the community through a border village in

Bauchi State.

Neighbours joined Dogon-

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Macebuh Dies

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dence in the same Du district, fought back tears on seeing the havoc.

He appealed to the survivors to hold their peace as the government would do everything humanly possible to bring the perpetrators to book.

The corpses have been deposited at the state Specialist Hospital and Jos University Teaching Hospital (JUTH).

Those who received bullet and machete wounds are being treated at the hospitals by doctors who were drafted from their homes to attend to the emergency cases.

The *Ghong-Gwom* Jos, Jacob Buba, told reporters in Dogon-Hauwa that what took place is unfortunate, lamenting that while the government and traditional rulers are trying to bring enduring peace to Jos and its environs, some people are bent on causing more trouble.

He described what happened in Dogon-Hauwa, which is in his domain, as a crime against humanity that should be thoroughly inves-

tigated and the perpetrators prosecuted.

He promised to ensure that justice is done in the matter, even if it means drawing the attention of the Presidency and the international community to the crime.

Police Public Relations Officer, Mohamed Lerema, confirmed the incident, and said the Police Commissioner, Ikechukwu Aduba, would soon address the media on it.

Pockets of attacks were also recorded at Heipang in Barkin Ladi Council at the weekend while Riyom Council has been having similar attacks by Fulani herdsmen in the past two weeks.

Tension built in Jos on Sunday afternoon as news of the killings filtered into the city, but the government urged everyone not to take the law into their hands.

Information Commissioner, Greg Nyelong, declared wanted, former Secretary of Plateau State Muslim Welfare Board, Saleh Bayari, for allegedly inciting the herdsmen.

He told a press conference in Jos that Bayari who re-

cently addressed journalists in Kaduna on the Jos crisis, has been inciting the Fulani against their host communities in Plateau.

He described the latest attack as "ethnic cleansing" carried out against the Berom, the ethnic group to which Jang belongs.

He said 500 persons were butchered, even as Jang toils day and night to maintain peace in the state.

"Saleh Bayari should be arrested because he has been issuing threats and recently addressed a press conference in Kaduna. We have copies of his statement in which he has been spreading false rumours and inciting Fulani against Berom natives," Nyelong said.

Acting President Goodluck Jonathan has placed the Army and other security agencies on red alert and ordered the arrest of the murderers.

He has, just days after receiving a briefing from Inspector General of Police, Ogbonna Onovo, on the recurring mayhem on the Plateau, scheduled another meeting with the

heads of security agencies.

A statement issued by Aso Rock said Jonathan directed the security agencies to "undertake strategic initiatives to confront and defeat these roving bands of killers."

He urged all Nigerians to remain peaceful and law abiding, "since violence only begets further violence."

Jonathan expressed sympathy for those who have lost relatives and friends in the attacks, and prayed God to grant them the fortitude to bear the loss.

The incident came two days after Jang embarked on a peace tour of the three Senatorial Districts in the state.

Witnesses said the violence began in the mostly Christian Dogon-Hauwa community at about 3 a.m. on Sunday - an hour when the area should have been under curfew and guarded by troops.

Military units began surrounding the villages around the same time, according to Red Cross Spokesman Robin Waubo, who said the agency did not know how many died, though officials have

been sent to local morgues and hospitals.

Police and military officials declined to comment on the attack or the motivation for it.

"It appears to be reprisal," Waubo told the *Associated Press* (AP).

In nearby Bauchi State, more than 600 people fled to a makeshift camp still holding victims of January's violence, said Adamu Abubakar, a Red Cross official.

"They started running away from the fighting," he disclosed, and "more continued to come."

Jos has remained under curfew since violence on January 17 left more than 300 people dead, the majority of them Muslims.

In January, a panel was still in the middle of a probe of the violence which occurred in Jos on November 28, 2008 that resulted in the death of several people.

Sectarian violence in the North has left thousands dead over the past decade, despite efforts by Abuja to quell religious extremism in the region.