

Gunmen kill two soldiers in Bauchi, family of four in Jos

• Terrorism is primitive, says Jonathan • Methodist Primate, Utomi caution against dialogue with Boko Haram

By Chesa Chesa (*Dutse*),
Temidayo Akinsuyi (*Lagos*),
Patience Ogbodo (*Bauchi*) and
Oladele Ogunsola (*Ibadan*)

UNKNOWN gunmen again on Monday night shot dead two soldiers at Azare, headquarters of Katagum Local Government area of Bauchi State.

A civilian was also wounded in the incident, which occurred at a 'suya' (roasted meat) joint along Kano-Potiskum-Maiduguri road in Azare.

A security source who confirmed the incident to our correspondent in a telephone interview said: "Yes they killed our men, two of them; we have received the report."

"Yesterday in the night unknown gunmen shot two soldiers to death and took away their rifles at a suya joint in Azare."

"It is unfortunate we have lost two of our brave soldiers, their dead bodies have been evacuated and deposited at the Federal Medical Centre (FMC), Azare; we will soon fish out the killers."

"One other person was also shot in the leg; he was also taken to hospital," the source added.

Residents of the area said the two soldiers went to the joint to buy suya and 'indomie' and the gunmen came in a car.

"When they saw the soldiers eating their suya and indomie in the joint they just took position and shot them to death; they took away their rifles and fled."

The incident caused panic and confusion among inhabitants of the busiest suya joint that operates 24 hours along Maiduguri-Kano highway.

The scene is near a petrol station in Azare.

Following the incident, traders and suya sellers hurriedly closed their shops and ran away.

Also in Plateau State, another set of gunmen struck in Chaha District of Jos South Local Government on Monday night, killing a man, his wife and two of their children. An eyewitness said the gunmen invaded the home of 42-year-old Yakubu Illiya when

CONTINUES ON PAGE 2

Gunmen kill two soldiers in Bauchi, family of four in Jos

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

they were about to go to bed at about 10 p.m. The hoodlums were said to have used machete to open the door to the Illiyas' house and met them right inside. Among those killed, apart from Yakubu Illiya, were one-year-old baby girl identified as Peace, Nuhu aged 10 years, and their mother, Lyop aged 38 years.

Another victim, 14-year-old Alice, was said to have sustained gunshot wounds. One of the surviving children, Patience, who narrated the story to newsmen said when the gang members arrived, they began calling the name of his murdered brother, Nuhu.

She said they were speaking impeccable English. "When they came, I heard one of them calling my brother's name, Nuhu. They were using something to break the door and when they eventually gained entrance, I tried to hide behind the door, but they shot at me.

"My elder sister hid behind the wall at the back of the house and was lucky not to be shot," Patience added. She said she did not know the fate of her parents thereafter, adding that it was when one of her uncles arrived the scene that they discovered that her parents and some of her siblings had been shot dead.

Special Adviser (Media) to Governor Jonah Jang, Pam Ayuba, who confirmed the incident, described it as a dastardly

act. He called on security agencies to intensify patrol in the affected areas.

And President Goodluck Jonathan, worried by the endless orgy of killings in the country, said in Dutse, Jigawa State, on Tuesday that it was primitive to terminate innocent lives in the name of whatever grievance.

He said both the perpetrators and sponsors of terrorism through Boko Haram cannot be anything but uncivilised human beings.

Prelate of the Methodist Church of Nigeria, Sunday Ola Makinde, also spoke on whether or not Federal Government should dialogue with the Islamic Boko Haram sect, saying if it is to happen it should not be on the terms of the group.

Jonathan made his remarks, as he ended a two-day visit of Jigawa State during which he inspected and commissioned several projects.

While commissioning the newly completed State Secretariat in Dutse, Jonathan deplored the resort to taking of innocent lives in the name of protesting any manner of grievance.

The President enjoined all Nigerians to condemn acts of terrorism and assist relevant authorities to check the trend which, he noted, was inimical to the development of the country.

He commended the people of Jigawa State for maintaining the peace even while their neighbouring states tend to be hotbeds of violence and terror.

The President praised the

state Governor, Sule Lamido, for his unique leadership qualities in transforming Jigawa within the five years he has been in office.

Jonathan was also full of commendation for the Governor for constructing an expansive state-of-the-art orientation camp for the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC).

The camp, which incorporates sporting facilities and accommodates 2,000 corps members, was named after former Head of State, Yakubu Gowon, who initiated the scheme in 1973.

Commissioning the camp, which he described as the best in the country, the President said it was a good testimony of judicious use of resources and support to the Federal Government.

Jonathan also laid the foundation stone for the Dutse Airport, declaring that with Nigeria's growing population and economy and complexity of business interactions, every state would need a standard, even if not international, airport.

The Governor said the airport project was dear to his heart having understood the observations made by the President.

On other projects he had embarked upon or completed, Lamido said he was doing them because of the urgent need to save Jigawa State from its parlous condition of under-development since it was created 21 years ago.

The Methodist Prelate, who gave the Federal Government

the go ahead to dialogue with the terrorists, said "to jaw-jaw is better than to war-war."

But he flayed the group for setting conditions for reconciliation with the government when in actual fact it was the aggressor.

Makinde expressed his view in Ibadan on Tuesday during an interaction with newsmen after the commissioning and dedication of Archbishop Ayo Ladigbolu House donated by Ibadan-born businessman, Bode Akindele.

Reviewing the regime of violence, bloodletting and deaths visited on Christians and churches in Nigeria by the group, Makinde said: "There is no harm in reconciliation as the government exists for the good of all Nigerians.

"But reconciliation with a group that has caused Nigeria and Nigerians much pain and agony should not be on their terms and conditions, rather it should be on the conditions of the government and the people," the clergyman stated.

According to him, "It is unimaginable that they are setting terms for reconciliation and even naming those to be on the government side and the venue is unacceptable to the Church and Christians in Nigeria.

Makinde reminded the Federal Government that acceding to the terms of reconciliation of the group "is dangerous and can set forth a chain of militancy in the country."

He called on politicians to

build on the successes of Edo and Ondo states governorship elections and concentrate on performance against 2015.

"By now, they would have seen that the electorate value performance in office and not the amount of campaign slogans and money you can throw about.

"Above all, we must pray to God to intervene in our polity and in the election by 2015," Makinde reiterated.

Frontline political economist and Director of the Lagos Business School, Pat Utomi, also called on the Boko Haram to embrace a ceasefire before calling for negotiations with government.

Utomi, who spoke in Lagos, said those mentioned by the sect as their representatives should publicly prevail on the group to end the wanton killings of innocent Nigerians first before any serious negotiation can take place with the Federal Government.

According to him, the sect will listen to them (representatives) and agree to ceasefire because they have a lot of respect and admiration for the so-called representatives.

"I expect that those who were named publicly by Boko Haram as their representatives should publicly call on the group to first ceasefire before they request for negotiations.

"I believe that since Boko Haram has publicly said they respect them, they will obey them," he said.