

PLATEAU VIOLENCE: 200 WOMEN, CHILDREN FLEE WASE, AS DEATH TOLL HITS 40

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By Onoja Audu, Correspondent, Jos

No fewer than 200 women and children have fled the troubled Wase Local Government of Plateau State to the neighbouring Kanam Local Government after the community became a target of gunmen who have made several attempts to invade the area.

The women were spotted carrying their belongings and fleeing to Dengi and Jarmai both in Kanam.

A youth leader in Wase town, Shafi'I Sambo, told newsmen in Jos on Tuesday that "over 200 women and children have fled the community so far," adding that the women started leaving on Friday after the first attack.

According to him, the men in the area could not guarantee the safety of their families and, therefore, had to hurriedly make arrangements for them to leave the town.

However, Sambo said the intervention of some community leaders has calmed the situation.

In his words, "Some community leaders have told members of the community to leave their families in Wase because such movements may cause fear and tension among people of other communities."

Spokesman of the military Special Task Force on Jos crisis, Salisu Mustapher, an Army Captain, however, denied knowledge of such mass movement of people from the local government area.

According to him, people who had earlier fled the area were being encouraged to return, as normalcy has returned.

The statement of the STF spokesperson is coming on the heels of a warning by security men in the troubled communities to the Senator representing the area, Victor Lar, that they could not guarantee his safety if he embarks on a tour of the affected community now.

Meanwhile, death toll from the attacks that rocked Zango village and Wase town, both in Wase Local Government, late on Monday rose to about 40 on Tuesday with the discovery of more corpses.

Daily Independent gathered that there were still pockets of attacks in some communities on Tuesday.

The source also confirmed that most residents of Wase have started relocating to Langtang North while others are moving to Kanam.

Meanwhile, Senator Lar has appealed to members of his warring communities to sheath their swords and embrace dialogue for

lasting peace to return to the area.

The lawmaker, who decried the spate of reprisal attacks that has claimed innocent lives, said continued attack will hamper development of the zone.

He called on traditional rulers and community leaders to take proactive steps through mutual understanding and dialogue to settle dispute.

He urged them to report mass movement of suspicious people who might not mean well for the entire people of both communities to enable government take adequate steps towards protection of lives and properties.

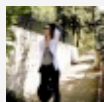
"I appealed to spirited individuals to assist us, because when there is crisis the most badly affected victims are women and children; houses have been burnt with food stuff also destroyed and they need relief materials.

"I want to assured that government is doing everything possible to ensure that lasting peace is restored.

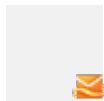
"The security agencies should be up and doing and the traditional rulers should also help government.

"I am told that mercenaries who are imported from outside Nigeria are involved in this crisis; they should report any suspicious movement of large strangers into the communities so that government can take proactive measures," Lar stated.

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@ sussan:you have no sympathy whatsoever for the people involved here. May they rest in peace.

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John E. Kay · Université Ahmadu Bello

Can this killings really be happening and nothing is done apart from appealing for calm. The insignia on of the Clothes used to cover the Corpse is "CHURCH OF CHRIST IN NIGERIA"..... Yet we have a Christian President?...

What can one say? The Fulani agenda of eliminating the Northern minorities is working ruthlessly well... Even Gov. Jang is sleeping. Lets not weep for the dead, lets weep for ourselves who are unlucky to be born in this generation..

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Allah help the poor once and masses guide them to your part protect them against the unforeseen danger and all evil doers ameen.

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