

Black Christmas In Plateau As Gunmen Kill 72

BY ACHOR ABIMAJE, JOS AND
GODWIN ENNA, Katsina

As most Nigerians looked forward to the joy and happiness of Christmas Day, murderers on Sunday cowardly crept into different communities in two local governments of Plateau State and slaughtered about 72 persons in cold blood.

Even though the military said they responded to 36 distress calls from different locations in the last 48 hours, their efforts did not stop the killers from their bloodthirsty quest.

In this vein, the Berom Youth Movement (BYM) has strongly condemned the horrific invasion of five communities by people they described as suspected Fulani herdsmen in Gashish and Ropp Districts of Barkin Ladi and Bokkos local government areas of Plateau State on Christmas Eve.

The coordinated attacks, BYM said, resulted in the killing of over 72 innocent persons while property worth millions of naira were also destroyed in the process.

BYM, in a statement issued in Jos by its national publicity secretary, Rwang Tengwong, said from the information available, nine persons were killed at NTV, five persons at Mai Yanga Sabo, three persons at Darwat and one person at Hurum, with neighbouring villages of Bokkos recording the highest deaths toll of over 40 persons while many others sustained various degree of injuries.

The statement also noted that food items were also looted.

According to the BYM statement, the terrorism act not only demonstrates a blatant disregard for human life but has also led to complete displacement of persons, while also undermining the peace and unity that are at the core of the nation's values.

BYM said: "On a day meant to celebrate love, compassion, and



Egbetokun



Mutfwang

togetherness, the perpetrators of this dastardly act have brought untold agony, suffering and grief to the affected communities in Bokkos and Mangu local government areas.

"The onslaught, followed by the invasion of Mangu and Bokkos on the 23rd day of December, 2023, claiming over 22 lives, explicitly depicts the mission of the marauders to consistently maim lives and mar the Yuletide which they have long planned that Plateau would be subjected to a 'mother-of-all-attacks' ever witnessed, which is currently being executed."

The BYM also consoled the families and loved ones of those who lost their lives in the attack and assured the affected communities that it stands in solidarity with them during this difficult time and will continue to advocate for justice and accountability.

Meanwhile, Plateau State Governor

Caleb Mutfwang has ordered the arrest of the killers, insisting they must face justice.

The governor, who stated this through his spokesman, Gyang Bere, confirmed the incident while calling for the arrest and prosecution of the perpetrators.

The governor also advised the public to remain calm and to inform the security agencies about anything that agitates their mind.

Mutfwang had on Monday said that at least 50 people were killed by gunmen in several communities in Mangu and Bokkos local government areas of the state.

The governor disclosed this at a luncheon organised by the Chief of Army Staff, Lt-Gen. Taoreed Lagbaja, for troops of Operation Safe Haven (OPSH) in Mangu.

Mutfwang expressed dismay over the spate of attacks and wanton destruction of farmlands and other

property by the gunmen.

He promised to adopt stringent measures in tackling insecurity in the state.

In a speech, the commander of Operation Safe Haven (OPSH), Maj-Gen. Abdusalam Abubakar, said his troops had responded to several distress calls during the attacks.

Abubakar said: "In the last 48 hours, we have responded to 36 distress calls from different locations, simultaneously. As we speak, some of our men are in hospital due to the injuries sustained in the attacks. But we are committed to ensuring that we put a stop to all criminal activities in Plateau."

3 Terrorists kill 8, abduct traders in Katsina

In another incident, no fewer than eight traders were killed by suspected gunmen at Kukan Babangida village in Katsina State.

The traders who were in a vehicle returning from Jibia weekly local market were shot by terrorists escaping from a military offensive in some parts of Zamfara State.

A credible source revealed that two of the traders were abducted while four other passengers were severely wounded by the attackers but are now receiving treatment in an undisclosed hospital.

"They were returning from Jibia market to Yan Gayya, a village close to Katsina metropolis when all of a sudden the hoodlums opened fire on their vehicle.

"The driver was shot dead which forced the vehicle to stop. The terrorists abducted those who were not wounded, and left without taking anything," the source said.

Among those killed were Sani Na Gogara, Yusuf Karamin Su, Sale Lami, Dan Hameme, Malam Shafi'i, Malam Dikke and Bashir Sani.

LEADERSHIP gathered that they had been buried according to Islamic rites.

Another source from a security outfit said: "Our people (soldiers) have been making life difficult for terrorists in these states. These terrorists are now fleeing the offensive and we've gathered that some of them are running to as far as the Niger Republic from Zumi and Sokoto States."

Police spokesperson in Katsina State, Abubakar Sadik Aliyu, who confirmed the attack, said the command had taken measures to avert further attacks in the area.

"Yes, it is true. The command has since deployed measures to prevent reoccurrence and has detailed its operational assets to track down and arrest the perpetrators.

"The CP condoles with the family, friends and loved ones of those affected by the incident," he added.