

AS their bodies were lowered in their graves, late afternoon of last Thursday, the Razat community in Barkin-Ladi local government area of Plateau state went into another deep mourning. Though the village had not been attacked like some others in recent times following the ethic clashes between Fulanis and the Beroms, two of their sons, Yakubu Fwan and Victor Dung, both cousins, were recently killed in Bauchi State.

They were murdered by yet to be identified assailants in Toro local government area of Bauchi state after their vehicle broke down around Sabongida, a village in-between Toro and Nabordo. In their separate accounts, Bulus Davou, owner of the Honda 82 model in which they were all traveling and Ishaya Bature said their suspected attackers even helped them with their torch lights when the mechanic was fixing the car about 7pm.

Both victims would have been saved if they

had heeded the counsel of their wives who insisted that they must find a place to sleep since their vehicle could not be repaired.

Their journey started on a good note that fateful day. Bulus and Ishaya, said they were heading to Yola and Jalingo where they work with the PW construction company.

Recalling how their colleagues were killed, Davou said, the attackers recognized that "we were Berom people". "They heard our conversation and they immediately knew that we were Beroms. After they noticed that, they all withdrew and we saw some of them started looking their shops at the time, but we did not realize the danger that was lurking.

"Our friend, Yakubu spoke to his wife and she told him to find a vehicle and leave for Yola that evening since he had money on him or find a

place and pass the night but we all did not yield to that wise counsel"

"We thought we could just pass the night inside the car by the main road not until about 9pm we became victims of an attack that left two of us dead" Davou stated.

"We were cracking jokes and all of a sudden we saw some people coming towards our car and as they got near they started hitting the windscreen of the car. They smashed the side glasses. We started shouting because we thought they were thieves. They forced the door of the car opened and started cutting us with machetes.

"We started shouting for help, but when we saw that no help will come. We had to look for a way of escape. We discovered they were Fulanis, so we started running into the bush even though we didn't know the area because we've not been there before, but we just had to run for escape. We

all ran in different directions. While I was running, I heard the voice of my brother Yakubu Fwan shouting and screaming. I kept running and after sometime I did not hear his shout again. I suspected they must have killed him. They caught up with my other brother Victor and killed him instantly.

"After killing him, they dragged his body to the road so that cars can run over his body. As at that time I noticed the Fulanis had mobilized many of their men and spread into the bush searching for us.

"Then the village head in that village went and reported to the police that some people are being attacked in the bush and he did not know who they are and that he heard them shouting for help".

Bature also recounted how he managed to escape from the attackers.

"They pursed me into the bush; about seven of them were running after me. When I saw a little

distance, I decided to pull my dress to disguise myself and hide. That was how I escaped their attack.

"I later found my way to the road and stopped one vehicle going to Maiduguri ; the driver said he was not going my way. But I told him the problem we are facing so he decided to pay my transport fare to Bauchi. On getting to Bauchi I met two policemen and I told them the problem, the two policemen directed me to the headquarters where I reported the incidence. The police went with a patrol vehicle to the scene. So I passed the night at the station. The next morning, one motorcycle rider came to report to the police that they saw a dead body on the main road. Later one of my brother who was driving the vehicle met me at the police station. At the end of it all we found that two of us were killed out of the four of us in the vehicle. The dead bodies were taken to the hospital in Toro.

Expectedly, widows of the deceased are traumatized by the sudden

death of their husbands which they said was going to make life very difficult for them.

"Honestly I am confused, I can't cope, I can't believe my husband is dead just like that; I have been left alone to shoulder the responsibility of the family", said Lydia widow of late Yakubu

"He only told me he was going to his place of work and up till now he has not returned. It is really a hell, I'm weak, I have no means of livelihood, he was our bread winner. Now how can I pay the children's school fees?" she lamented.

Widow of the other victim is also in a fix. "I m feeling frustrated because, I have been left alone without a husband. He was the source of my food and drink, now I m in trouble, who will assist me again?"

They both pleaded with the government to come to their aid and stop indiscriminate killings in the state.