

# News

## 12 killed by suspected Fulani herdsmen

**T**WELVE people were allegedly killed yesterday night in an attack on Berom in Barkin Ladi Local Government Area of Plateau State by suspected Fulani herdsmen.

Spokesman of the Special Task Force (STF) in charge of peacekeeping in Jos, Capt. Charles Ekeocha, has denied that soldiers were involved in attacks against indigenes.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that many villages have suffered attacks reportedly carried out by men in army uniforms.

Victims have accused the soldiers of complicity after identity cards and bank documents were reportedly found at some scenes of the attacks in Riyom Local Government Area.

But Ekeocha told NAN yesterday in Jos that it was "sim-

• 'Soldiers not involved in Jos attacks' • STF arrests 29

From Yusufu Aminu Idegu,  
Jos

ply impossible" for soldiers to be involved in the attacks.

He said: "We are here to restore and keep the peace and not to compound issues as being insinuated. So the idea of suspecting the soliders should not even arise."

The STF spokesman urged the people to organise themselves and identify strangers in their midst and alert the STF.

Ekeocha said five soldiers, who were arrested for alleged laxity during attacks on a village, would be punished if found guilty.

Ekeocha appealed to the people to stop the "frivolous accusations" and partner the STF to restore peace.

Sources said over 100 Fulani herdsmen attacked some Berom villages in Barkin Ladi and killed eight persons.

In one of the villages; Dinjok, a man was killed. At Dinsusu, a woman and her child were killed by the assailants.

Three men were killed at Jong village and three at Dorowa.

It was also learnt that two people were killed at Marra-ba Kantoma.

The Chairman of Barkin Ladi council, Dr Fom Dakwak, said: "We have 13 bodies so far with several injured at the hospitals."

STF Commandant Brig.-Gen Hassan Umaru led reinforcement from Jos to the area and arrested 29 persons.

There was a gun battle,

which left two dead and a soldier injured.

Ekeocha said: "We got information of an attack in Dorowa, a village in Barkin Ladi council at about 1pm. Sector 7 of the military troops mobilised and went to the scene.

"On arrival at the village, the youths directed them to the route of the fleeing attackers. The troops of the STF pursued the attackers, who opened fire on sighting us.

"Two people were killed; one of our soldiers was also shot. But we overpowered them and arrested 29 of them.

"Two AK-47 rifles, two local pistols and ammunition were recovered. One AK-47 and a pistol was found in a mosque and the other AK from a Berom man, who-claimed to be a rev-



• Brig.-Gen. Umaru

erend.

Captain Ekaocha said "one of those arrested is Corporal Muhammad Uba of 44 Police Mobile Force, Abuja.

"He was arrested with arms and four cartridges."

Ekeocha hailed the youths for their support.

He said "the suspects and all the arms will be handed over to the police."