

are in Cross River, the former President, through a letter dated October 31, 2006, shared them between the two states, giving 76 to Akwa Ibom and 14 to Cross River.

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•The late Sen. Dantong's widow, Hanitatu (left), Plateau State Governor Jonah Jang and his wife, Talatu, during their visit to the late Dantong's family in Jos...on Monday

PHOTO: NAN

More attacks in Plateau as 140 bodies lie unburied



•The late Dantong

- Boko Haram claims responsibility ■Senate honours Dantong
- Why Berom are attacked, by lawmaker ■Jang relaxes curfew

GUNMEN have continued to invade communities in Barkin Ladi and Riyom local government areas of Plateau State, it was learnt yesterday.

Tse and Shong villages are under attack, according to the member representing Riyom Constituency in the House of Assembly, Hon Daniel Dem.

Dem told *The Nation* yesterday: "I can authoritatively confirm to you that as I am

‘The two villages, Tse and Shong, have been reduced to rubble, with no house standing. Forty-five houses were burnt. The gunmen came in their usual style, with sporadic shooting,’

From Yusufu Aminu Idegu,
Jos

talking to you now, the same gunmen from top of the mountain have attacked two

more villages.

"The two villages, Tse and Shong, have been reduced to rubble, with no house standing. Forty-five houses were

burnt. The gunmen came in their usual style, with sporadic shooting. The villagers were scared and they ran out of their houses. The gunmen set the houses ablaze and the residents have added up to the number of displaced people in the area."

In the view of the lawmaker, the Defence Headquarters and the Force Headquarters should intervene to save more lives.

"Because, as I am talking to you now, those 140 bodies are still lying there without burial; we are still afraid of going back there," Dem said.

He praised the Special Task Force (STF) for its efforts, saying:

"Without them, this situation would have been worse. They actually helped

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•PRESIDENCY TO ACTIVISTS: GO TO BUREAU FOR JONATHAN'S ASSETS FORM P61



• Ogun State Governor, Senator Ibikunle Amosun, handing over the party symbol to ACN chairmanship candidate in Ijebu Northeast Local Government, Hon. Femi Odunfowokan, at the party's campaign rally in Atan... yesterday. Story on Page 56

\$620,000 bribe: Police quiz Jagaba

THE Chairman, House of Representatives Committee on Drugs and Narcotics, Mr. Adams Jagaba, was yesterday quizzed by the Police in connection with the \$620,000 bribe collected by Hon Farouk Lawan from businessman Femi Otedola.

Jagaba, who had declined police invitation, is linked with the briber following Lawan's claim that he informed him when the bribe was offered by the businessman and that he deposited the cash with him. But Jagaba, in a statement, denied having the money.

Otedola said Lawan demanded bribe to enable him remove the name of his company - Zenon oil and Gas - from the list of companies indicted for collecting foreign exchange without importing fuel. He said he informed security men who carried out a sting operation by giving Lawan marked bills.

From Gbade Ogunwale and Dele Anofi, Abuja

But Lawan, the former chair of the House of Representatives subsidy management committee, said Otedola was chasing him with bribe and that he collected it as evidence of the pressure.

Jagaba, who yesterday honoured the invitation, arrived at the Force Headquarters, Abuja around 11 am.

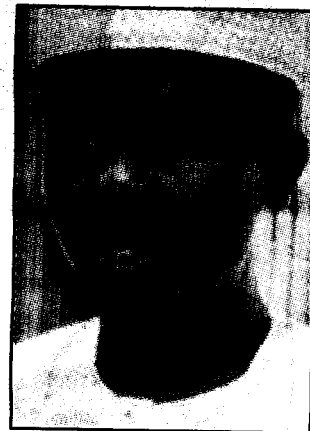
He was quizzed by the Special Investigation Panel.

Police spokesman Frank Mba who confirmed Jagaba's visit said the lawmaker was allowed to go home after making a statement to police investigators. He described Jagaba's statement as "useful statement that could aid investigation on the scandal".

Jagaba confirmed his visit to the police. He, however, declined further comments on the matter, saying he would issue a statement today.

"There is no cause for alarm," he said.

"My friend, you are the 21st reporter that called me today and it is actually impossible to talk to 21 people separately, but I want to assure you that there is no cause for alarm. I will issue a statement tomorrow (today) to answer your questions," Jagaba said.



• Lawan

More attacks in Plateau as 140 bodies lie unburied

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died last Sunday.

during the attack in Maseh while we were doing the burial. They came there with their armoured tank and as the people ran for safety, the STF shot from inside the armoured car twice. This scared the gunmen from coming after us.

"If the STF had shown their superior power earlier than that, the gunmen would not have attacked us during the mass burial. Our two legislators would not have died of the shock. I wish the STF had acted faster than they did, but, all the same, they deserve commendation and I'm urging them to do more to help our people."

The STF (Operation Safe Haven) reacted to conflicting reports on how the two lawmakers - Senator Gyang Dantong and Hon Gyang Fulani -

In a statement in Jos, the media officer of the STF, Capt. Salisu Mustapha said: "The reaction became necessary to correct some wrong media reports over the cause of death of the lawmakers."

"The panic that caused the death of the senator and majority leader would have been avoided, if they had listened to instruction of the STF Platoon Commander, DSP Suleiman Kabiru, who asked people to lie down following the sound of the sporadic gunshot. The people chose to run rather than lie down and the stampede caused the deaths."

Islamist militant group Boko Haram yesterday claimed responsibility for the weekend attacks.

In a statement written in Hausa and signed by Boko

Haram leader Abul Qaqa, the sect said: "We thank God for our success in the attack on Christians at Barkin Ladi and Riyom, whereby security agents, Christians and two state and national assembly members were killed."

The statement continued with a warning: "We are also informing Christians all over the country to embrace Islam or they will be attacked. If they fail to do so, there is nobody to blame but themselves."

"More attacks will be carried out as we have successfully done at Plateau and Kano on Christians and security informers. ... Kano people must desist from giving information to security agents who are attacking them and their hired houses in Kano."

Initial news reports indicated that the fighting was due

to disputes over land, with government officials evicting the Fulani tribesmen from certain pastures around Jos, and with Fulani herdsmen taking out their anger on Berom Christians' homes and churches.

In the Boko Haram statement, Abul-Qaqa insisted that the sect will leave no stone unturned in its goal of forcing all Christians out of the country. The statement also denied assertions from National Security Adviser Sambo Dasuki that he has made contact with Boko Haram, and found them ready to negotiate. "The claim made by the National Security Adviser to President Goodluck Jonathan, Mr. Sambo Dasuki, is a lie and has no iota of truth."

But Boko Haram, in their statement, said they would

continue to target Nigerian soldiers and security officials, even in their homes. There will be "no hiding place or rest for any government agents and security," the statement read, "because we are going to carry out attacks on them and their houses."

The Plateau state government has announced the review of the curfew imposed as a result of the attacks.

Governor Jang, after a Security Council meeting that lasted six hours in the government House, Rayfield Jos said: "Following the review of security situation in the state, the Security Council has seen great improvement in peace and hereby agrees to relax the curfew."

"The curfew now runs from 7pm to 6am."

Supreme Court codes 76 disputed oil wells