

A Gunmen kill 45 in Plateau

MULTIPLE attacks on four communities in Barkin Ladi Local Government Area of Plateau State have left 45 people dead.

The four villages are Tatu, Rawuru, Bok, and Dorang, all from Fan district.

The attack came just two days after Governor Jonah Jang raised the alarm on a plot to attack the state.

The attack was said to have been carried out simultaneously early yesterday, according to the village head of Tatu, Da Pam Gyang.

The victims have been buried by relatives in mass graves.

It was gathered that over 10 persons escaped death during the attack. It was a gory sight when our correspondent visited the area.

Some victims were burnt beyond recognition inside their houses.

Many survivors were seen relocating to the council headquarters; some went to Jos with their families.

A member of Rawuru, who gave his name as Dalyop Shom, said: "We have to run away now. We thought we lived with the Special Task Force and are protected. But these attacks prove contrary."

"I have no hope in security agencies, I have to go and take refuge wherever my safety and that of my

- Including family of seven
- STF: figure was 37
- Victims buried

From Yusufu Aminu Idegu,
Jos

children is guaranteed."

Another villager, Jok Chollom, said: "The gunmen stormed my relative's house at 12:30am and killed the father, the mother and their seven children."

Chollom vowed not to sleep in the village again. "I don't feel safe in this village anymore, the security agencies did not come to the aid of the community."

"At 1am yesterday, I started hearing gunshots; I rushed out and saw bodies of members of my community. They were killed in their sleep."

"Our village was under siege for more than one hour, with no help from any security agencies in the area."

Pam Yakubu, who lost six relatives, said: "The gunmen started shooting sporadically. I managed to escape. When I returned from my hideout, there was blood and bodies everywhere. They killed my neighbours - Davou, Yop, Sarah, Felix, Timothy and Dung."

"The strategies adopted by

the attackers show that they must be professionals. They spoke good English."

He appealed to security operatives to strengthen security around the council to prevent a recurrence.

Speaking to reporters at one of the graveyards, President of Church of Christ In Nations (COCIN) Soja Bewarang, described the attacks as an attempt to wipe out the people.

Rev Bewarang said: "Although security operatives around, the gunmen still entered the communities and embarked on this brutal and inhuman affair."

He called on the government and the Special Task Force to restore order to the state.

The Interim Sole Administrator of Barkin Ladi, Habila Dung, described the killings as barbaric.

He said: "The high number of deaths in these attacks gave the suspicion of ethnic cleansing; the gunmen intended to wipe out these people."

Dung said: "I got a call at about 1 am yesterday that hundreds of gunmen had stormed the villages. I noti-

fied security operatives."

A statement by the Special Task Force (STF) on Jos crises reads: "This is to inform the public that on November 26 at 2am, unknown gunmen carried out coordinated attacks in Katu Kapang, Daron, Tul and Rawuru villages of Barkin Ladi and Mangu Local Government Areas."

The statement, which was signed by its media officer, Capt Salisu Mustapha, said: "The attackers killed about 13 persons in Katu Kapang, eight in Daron, nine in Tul and seven others in Rawuru. Five people were reportedly injured."

"On receiving the report, STF personnel moved to the scene to bring the situation under control but the gunmen fled on sighting the troops. The situation was, however, brought under control by men of the STF."

"The Commander of the Task Force, Maj-Gen David Enetie, has visited the villages to assess the situation."

The Plateau State government said the attack was an attempt to prevent the Jonah Jang administration from consolidating on the peace in the state, particularly in Barkin Ladi.

Jang, last Sunday, at the COCIN headquarters raised the alarm that forces were on their way to wreck havoc on the state.

b. Man remanded for 'murder'