

# Community leaders in Benue, Taraba to be arrested

**T**HE Benue and Taraba governments have directed security agents to arrest any community leader who harbours criminals in his domain.

Governors Gabriel Suswan of Benue and Danbaba Suntai of Taraba States, gave the directive at the end of their peace meeting in Gawa, Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

According to them, the security agents have been mandated to arrest any community leader that allows his subjects to indulge in killing and committing robbery.

Suswan, who briefed newsmen said they agreed not to spare any community leader that allows his domain to serve as a sanctuary for criminals.

"We have agreed not to spare any community leader that allows his subjects to rape or injure innocent people along the high ways in the two states," he said.

He said that the era of committing an offence in one state and cross to the other

## for harbouring criminals

state to escape arrest was over.

Suswan said the security agents from the two states, should operate jointly to apprehend anyone trying to disrupt economic activities in the two states.

Suntai appealed to the community leaders to sheath their swords in order for peace to reign in the two states.

He called on them to strive hard to unearth the criminals that were causing trouble in the two states.

Earlier, a Tiv leader, Mr. Thomas Dogara, had assured the two governors that they would put down their weapons, due to inter-marriages between the two tribes.

Dogara appealed to rumour mongers to stop spreading false information, a factor largely responsible for the break down of law and order in the two states.

Also speaking at the occasion, Mr. Bawa Vaki from Kuteb tribe, said they would work hard towards peace in the two states.

No fewer than 50 persons

were reportedly killed in the hostilities which broke out in the settlements along the Benue-Taraba boundary in

March.

The recent incident, was last Thursday's killing of a European woman, an official of an International NGO, and the security man attached to her.

## We're committed to war on HIV

*By AKPUS JOHN, Kaduna*

**T**HE deputy governor of Kaduna State, Mr. Patrick Ibrahim Yakowa has said that government has taken the fight against the spread of HIV/AIDS very seriously by using multi sectoral approach.

The deputy governor spoke through Mr. Patrick Katuka at a one-day stake holders forum on HIV/AIDS stigma reduction to commemorate this year's stigma reduction season organised by the State Agency for the Control of HIV/AIDS (KADSACA) and Strengthening Nigeria Response on HIV/AIDS (SNR) held at Women Multi-purpose Centre in Kaduna.

The deputy governor who is the chairman of KADSACA further said that government is determined to reduce the prevalence rate of 5.5% in the state to 0% through aggressive advocacy in collaboration with NGOs, CSOs, network of

people living with the virus, religious and community leaders and other stakeholders to embark on advocacy campaign on HIV/AIDS stigma reduction and spread of the virus.

He lamented that despite reported compassion towards PLWHAs, stigma and discrimination remains high among most target population while people living with the virus remain faceless because of the dread of stigmatisation.

Earlier, the project manager of the Kaduna State Agency for the control of HIV/AIDS (KADSACA), Dr. Mark Anthony said the first stakeholders forum on HIV/AIDS stigma reduction was to introduce the concept of the stigma season as an annual event to all stakeholders in the state's HIV/AIDS response.

He explained further that one of the primary aims of the meeting was also to encourage the mainstreaming of anti-