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Plateau: 40 killed, 10 injured, several houses burnt in a fresh attack

Written by Isaac Shobayo - Jos with Agency Report | Wednesday, 27 November 2013 00:00 | font size

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THE

prevailing peace in Plateau State was shattered on Tuesday, when gunmen launched spontaneous attacks on four villages in Barakin-Ladi Local Government Area of the state, killing 40 people, mostly women and children in the midnight raid.

Governor Jonah Jang had on Sunday at Church of Christ In All Nations (COCIN) raised the alarm that there was a plan by some elements to attack the state and urged the people to be vigilant.

Nigerian Tribune learnt that the gunmen invaded the four villages of Tatu, Rahure, Bwok and Dorong with sophisticated weapon about 1:00 a.m on Tuesday when the inhabitants had gone to bed without any premonition of possible attack on their communities.

The village head of Tatu, Da Pam Gyang Tsok who escaped death by the whisker told newsmen that 15 people, mostly women and children were brutally killed by the marauders who stormed the village in their large number adding that the attackers attacked just two families and wiped out the entire households.

According to him, they suddenly heard sporadic gunshot at about 1:00 a.m adding that the attackers

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went for just two families in the village and killed all of them in their respective houses.

"We were shocked by the attack because we had no quarrel with any group or person and have been living in peace with non natives in our midst. But the attack was carried out in a barbaric manner that is beyond human comprehension, they set some houses on fire and attacked two families, killing 15 people at a go.

"A boy of less than one year old who was crying when the attackers attacked the family was shot at close range while his remains littered the room when we called. We are short of word with this barbaric incident," he said.

At Rawure village in the same local government it was a tale of sorrow and anguish, the attackers killed nine and wounded five people who are presently receiving treatment at the Plateau State Specialist Hospital.

A community leader, Job Chollom told Nigerian Tribune that the deadly operation was carried out at about 1:00 a.m adding that the entire village was surrounded by the gunmen who were in military uniform and passed instruction to one another in Fulani language while the operation lasted.

He disclosed that two families were attacked and five injured. Some of the names of those killed were Deborah, 10 years old, Christopher, 4 years, a man and his wife and a boy less than one year.

Nigerian Tribune further learnt that 10 people were killed in Bwok village and another seven killed in Dorong village within the same hour by the same set of marauders while seven were injured in the two attacks.

The Interim Administrator of Barakin-Ladi Local Government Area, Mr Habila Dungs who confirmed that 40 people were killed in the attack on four villages said the attacks were carried out spontaneously, making it difficult for the security men to curtail the invasions.

"It was a coordinated attack, the four villages were attacked at the same time and at the same hour. It was a barbaric act, no right thinking person can carry out such ignoble act," he said. All those who died in the unfortunate incident were given mass burial in their respective villages at about 10:30 a.m.

Speaking with newsmen shortly after the mass burial in Tatu, the outgoing President of COCIN, Reverend Soja Bewarang who strongly condemned the barbaric act said it was difficult to believe that such thing could happen with the presence of security men all over the place.

The clergyman who said the plan of the attackers was to wipe out the future of the communities called on both the government and security agencies to double up their efforts to curtail the incessant attack on innocent people, which is now becoming an embarrassment to the country.

The Special Task Force (STF) in a statement signed by its Media Officer, Captain Mustapha Salisu confirmed the incident adding that the force personnel swiftly moved to the scenes to bring the situation under control but the gunmen fled on sighting the arrival of the troops.

The statement pointed out that the situation was brought under control by men of the STF and as well secured the areas adding that the Commander of the Task Force, Major General David Enetie has visited the villages to assess the situation and has vowed that no stone would be left unturned to fish out the perpetrators of this dastardly act.

Still reeling from the attack on four villages in Barakin-Ladi Local Government Area of Plateau State which led to the death of 40 people, the local government councillorship primary in Langtang North Council on Tuesday was disrupted leading to the death of three people.

Nigerian Tribune learnt that the primary turned violent at about 11:00 a.m in Shishiri venue of Pajat ward where Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) primary was taking place when some rival groups within the party engaged themselves over some electoral misdemeanours.

It was gathered that the situation turned rowdy when some men of the Special Task Force (STF) deployed to the area were trying to maintain law and order and to rescue one of the electoral officials, who was being manhandled by some aggrieved youths.

A source close to the scene revealed that the youths, most of whom were allegedly dead drunk hauled stones and other dangerous objects at the STF men who were trying to bring the chaotic situation under control, adding that the security agents in the process released volley shot into the air to disperse the irate youths.

It was learnt that stray bullets in the process hit three people believed to have died on the spot. Immediately the angry youths barricaded the main road and also burnt tires to protest the killing of three of their colleagues.

When contacted by Nigerian Tribune, the spokesman of the STF, Captain Salisu Mustapha said the command is yet to get detail of the development and promised to get back later.

However, the PDP councillorship primary elections conducted in most Local Government Areas of



the state on Tuesday were marred by hiccups.

However, the police in Plateau on Tuesday confirmed that multiple attacks were carried out on four communities in Barkin Ladi Local Government Area of the state on Monday.

The report said many people were confirmed dead with several others injured in the attacks on the communities.

Mrs Felicia Anselem, the spokesperson of the command, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Jos that the attacks were carried at about 1.00 a.m.

"The attacks were carried out concurrently at four different locations at Rawuru, Tasu, Foron and Gurabok.

"Many people died and several others injured, but we cannot give the exact number of the casualties yet because our men are collating the figures," Anselem said.

The spokesperson, however, said that the casualty figure would be publicised after collation.

Captain Salisu Mustapha, the spokesperson of the STF in charge of security in Plateau also confirmed the attack to NAN.

Mustapha said the STF was still gathering the details of the incident and could not give the casualty figures.

"I will give the details of the incident as soon as we have them," he said.

NAN reports that before the incidents, there were two other attacks in Barkin Ladi and Shendam local government areas in the last five days.

The police had said five people were killed in those attacks.

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