

2 farmers killed in Plateau, others abandon farm It is an orchestrated attack — Senator Pwajok

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ANOTHER set of farmers were on Monday, killed in Ropp village, in Plateau State, as other farmers in troubled communities of the state abandoned their farms, following incessant attack on villages by suspected to be Fulani herdsmen.

Nigerian Tribune gathered that villages, where recent attack took place were predominantly farming communities and are now deserted, following the attacks while most of the inhabitants taking refuge at nearby local government headquarters.

It was learnt that the attackers, on Sunday, struck when most of the people had gone to bed. They were, however, repelled by men of the Special Task Force deployed to the vicinity, but, two people were killed by the attackers.

Apparently disturbed by the attacks, the senator representing Plateau North, Senator Gyang Pwajok has stated that the attacks were orchestrated war against the people of the state.

In the last two weeks, no fewer than six communities were attacked in Plateau State and many people were attacked in an attack suspected to have been perpetrated by Fulani herdsmen.

Speaking in an interview in Jos, Senator Pwajok said attacks on Plateau communities have become a vicious circle and being made to look as if the communities were rising up in arm against themselves, adding that this is a ploy by some external aggressors to mislead the public to further unleash mayhem on the people in the guise of community conflict.

"The vicious circle of violence is an indication that there are some people, who do not want Plateau people to live in peace with one another. It is not a community conflict but conflict orchestrated by external influence to disorganise Plateau and turn the peace loving people against themselves," he said.

Senator Pwajok pointed out that the military onslaught against insurgents in the North Eastern part of the country seem to have pushed the militias to their new areas of attack, adding that the latest attacks especially in Plateau State were misrepresented to be as a result of cattle rustling or conflict between farmers and cattle rearers.

Senator Pwajok, who said community relationship at all levels must be reviewed and reinforced as a means of addressing the incessant

attacks, charged the political class to see the ugly trend as something that affect the people, regardless of political affiliations.

"Political class also must see this as something that affects people, regardless of political affiliations. They should be able to sit on round table and find lasting solution to this because it appears there are people who want to create a state within a state, that itself is very disturbing.

"Some people have come up with a mentality on the kind of state they want to create within Nigeria. And they don't give a dam whether it is PDP or APC in government. These attacks have to regard for party, when it happens it affect

all, so political class must close rank and address the problem collectively" he said.

Youths, women protest

Commercial activities were temporarily paralysed and vehicular movement disrupted on Monday in Jos, Plateau State following a protest by youths and women over the incessant attacks in northern and southern parts of Plateau State, which has led to loss of many lives.

No fewer than 70 people were killed within the past eight days in Barakin Ladi, Riyom and Wase local government areas of the state and many houses burnt by attackers suspected to be Fulani herdsmen.

The protesters in huge

number from various parts of the state stormed the state capital, on Monday, protesting the killings, which have now become a regular occurrence. They barricaded major roads linking the city and carried card placards with various inscriptions, denouncing the government and security agencies.

The youths also threatened to petition the Federal Government and the Nigeria military before the International Criminal Court (ICC), for crimes against humanity and killing unarmed civilians, if both the Federal Government and the military does not take action.

Speaking with newsmen, Daniel Meshak, who led the protesters, condemned the killings and called on

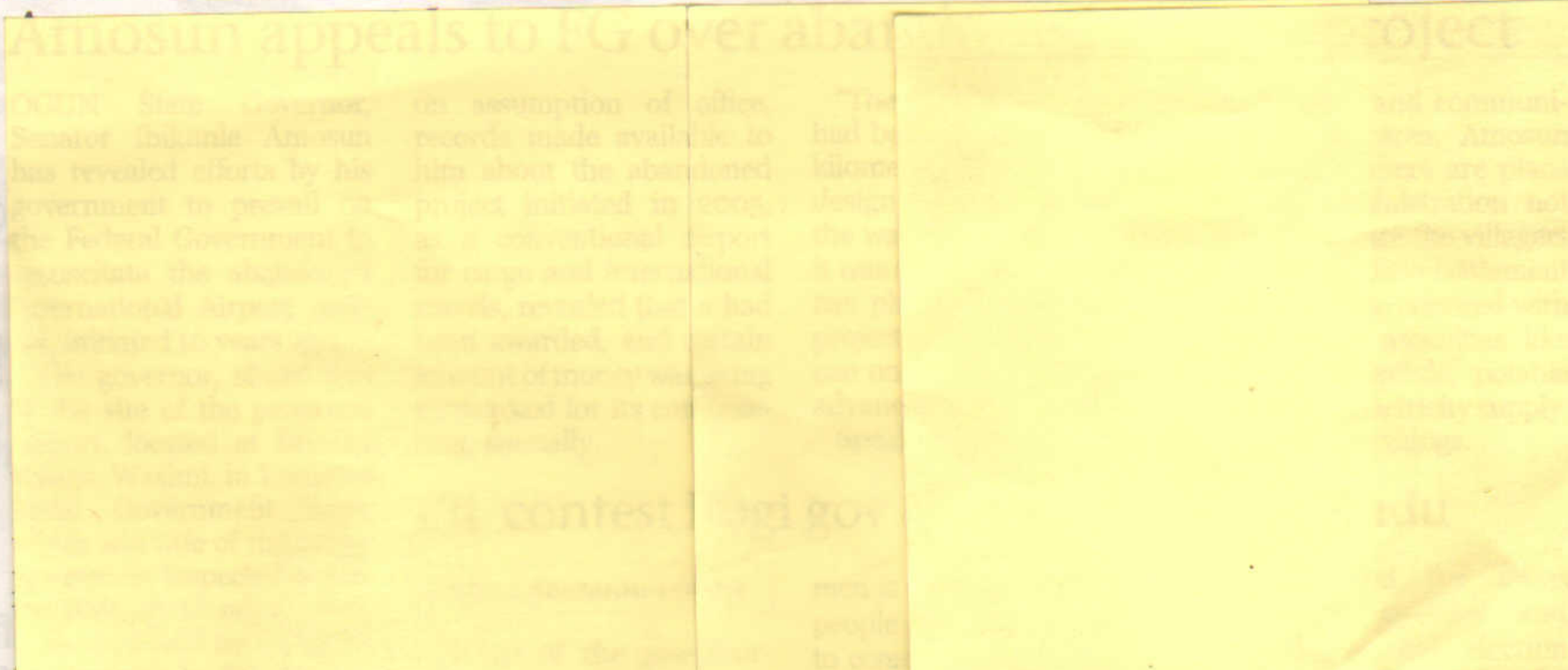
all authorities concerned to appropriately deal with the matter, to prevent further loss of lives.

According to him, Plateau State has become known for incessant night attacks by attackers, who are either identified as unknown gunmen or Fulani herdsmen. What is more disturbing is the fact that these attacks were carried out when the Special Task Force (STF) are in full operation in Plateau.

He called for a thorough search in Mahanga, Bangyai, Shonong, Atakar, Kwi, Rim and Sopp villages of Riyom Local Government of Plateau State, as well as parts of Bokkos, to fish out those unknown men, who have been terrorising the areas.



Ogun State governor, Senator Ibikunle Amosun (middle), deputy governor-elect, Mrs Yetunde Onanuga (second left); General Manager, South-West Region, China Civil Engineering Construction Company (CCECC), Mr Li Bing (right); Commissioner for Commerce and Industry, Bimbo Ashiru (third left) and Commissioner for Budget and Planning, Mrs Yewande Muoyo (left), at the site of the Proposed Federal Airport, Imosan, in Ewekoro Local Government Area, on Monday.



Government to appeal and encourage it to complete the project, noting that since its benefits to the government and the people of the state are immense, government cannot afford to abandon it.

He maintained that though the project is purely a Federal Government sponsored project, the state government is ready to facilitate it, so as to better the lots of its people.

According to the governor,

ship election in October, in Kogi State, the former governor of Kogi State, Abubakar Audu has declared his intention to contest under the All Progressives Congress (APC), for the seat.

Speaking at his country home in Ogbonicha, Ofu Council Area, at a reception he organised for APC National Assembly and state assembly members-elect in the state.

Audu stated "voice of

performance between 1999 and 2003. As a matter of fact, Kogi is my baby and if I turn my back against my baby, it means I am an irresponsible father."

Audu explained that he is coming back to "salvage and, rescue the state and place it back to where he left it in 2003 and even go beyond."

Speaking on the victory of APC in the just-concluded general election, "we have

and the APC performed very well. We are ready for the governorship election in the state, even if it is tomorrow because APC would win the election."

The former governor however assured that with the emergence of the President-elect, General Muhammadu Buhari, a disciplined manager and a great leader, things would come to shape in the country.