

Another 13 feared killed, 275 houses burnt, farms destroyed in Plateau

Four persons killed, 50 houses burnt, say police

Isaac Shobayo | Jos

STILL reeling from the killings and destruction of farms last week in Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau State by suspected Fulani militia, no fewer than 13 people were killed on Saturday in renewed hostilities between natives and herdsmen in Miango district of the council area.

Nigerian Tribune gathered that apart from the 13 people who were killed on both sides of the divide, 20 others sustained gunshot wounds, while 275 houses belonging to natives were burnt and several farms destroyed.

The National Publicity Secretary of Irigwe Youth Movement, Mr Lawrence Zongo, who confirmed the attack on the natives by the

suspected militia, said four communities, DTV, Zanzwrah, Kpatenvien and Kpachudu, among others, were attacked.

According to Zongo, the attackers invaded the communities at about 7:00 p.m. on Saturday and went on killing and destruction spree till the early hours of Sunday, just as he added that seven persons were killed, nine injured and 275 houses burnt, while farms with different types of crop belonging to 368 farmers were destroyed by the militia.

"Quite a lot of people have been displaced as a result of this latest attack. Apart from the communities attacked, those living in neighbouring communities have started relocating to Jos, the state capital. We are now at the mercy of God as the government has

abandoned us.

"We call on the international community to come to our aid as the Nigerian government has betrayed us for long, leaving us at the mercy of gunmen," Zongo said.

Also, the secretary of Irigwe Development Association, Mr Danjuma Auta, said the association could not give an actual figure on the number of deaths and property destroyed by the militia until the search team it raised finished its work.

Auta said: "The search is still ongoing; it is after this exercise that we can come up with the exact number of casualty and property destroyed. All I can tell you is that many houses were burnt and farms with different types of crop also destroyed.

"It is unfortunate that as they [militia] were killing

people, they were also cutting down crops. We don't know why this is happening to us. All we are saying is that let there be peace but the government is silent over our predicament."

However, the Plateau State chairman of Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), Nura Muhammad, said six herders were killed on Saturday by Miango youths, just as he blamed the Irigwe people for the continued violence in council area.

He said six herders lost their lives during the attack which he alleged was launched on their settlement, adding that 11 of his people have also been hospitalised.

"What happened yesterday [Saturday] was that the Irigwe people mobilised their kinsmen and attacked

our people in Rafin Bwauna village, a settlement mainly occupied by Muslims, Hausa and Fulani. We tried as much as possible to inform the security but to no avail.

"We are still compiling the names of those killed, but for now, we lost about six of our people, while 11 persons are in various hospitals.

"We in Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria condemn in total the recent happenings in Bassa LGA. We see it as tit-for-tat madness. We are calling on the government and security agencies to rise up to the challenge before the situation gets out of hand.

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) in the state, ASP Ubah Gabriel Ogaba, in a statement, said only four persons were killed and 50 houses

burnt during the violence, just as he added that normalcy had returned to the communities.

He said: "On July 31, the command received a report that there was a conflict between gunmen suspected to be Fulani militia and youths from Irigwe at Jebbu Miango in Bassa Local Government Area of the state. Unfortunately, 50 houses were torched and four natives were also shot dead.

"Upon receipt of the report, the tactical team of the command was immediately deployed to the scene to tighten security of the area and to restore peace.

"The Commissioner of Police, Edward Egbuka, with other senior officers of the command visited the scene and has ordered a discreet investigation to fish out the perpetrators of the dastardly act."