

Plateau killings escalate, death toll rises to 32

Govt declares 24-hour curfew, 20 suspects arrested IGP deploys team

UNIJOS suspends second semester examinations

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THE number of those killed in Plateau State has increased to 32 following Sunday morning reprisals in some parts of Jos, the state capital, resulting in the state government declaring a 24-hour curfew.

It will be recalled that 25 commuters on transit to Ikare in Ondo State were killed, while many others sustained injuries on Saturday when the vehicles they were travelling in ran into a procession of mourners on Rukuba Road in Jos North Local Government Area of the state.

Nigerian Tribune gathered that the incident escalated in the early hours of Sunday when some youths barricaded roads within Jos metropolis, precisely Bauchi road, Masalachi Jumat area, Angwan Rukuba and many other places to avenge the

death of those killed on Saturday.

The situation caused tension within the state capital, which made many Christian worshipers stay indoors to avoid being attacked, while those who ran into the youth were stabbed with knives.

A source close to the Plateau State Specialist Hospital said four corpses were brought to the hospital in the early hours of Sunday, while another three were deposited at Our Lady of Apostles Hospital.

Efforts to reach the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) in the state, ASP Gabriel Ogaba, on phone proved abortive.

The governor, Simon Lalong, in a statement signed by his Director of Press Affairs, Dr Makut Simon Macham, said the 24-hour curfew would come into effect from Sunday in Jos North Local Government Area, adding that the step was necessitated by security reports which indicate rising threats to the safety of

lives and properties within the council area.

Governor Lalong, while giving a report on Saturday's attack, said 23 people among those attacked lost their lives, while 23 others sustained injuries and are currently receiving treatment.

He added that 26 others were rescued unhurt, while 20 suspects were arrested and under investigations to get to the bottom of the matter.

He said: "Having reviewed the reports and monitored the unfolding scenario, government is concerned about the persisting tensions and reported attempts by some persons to take laws into their hands by threatening to attack individuals and private facilities, as well as public property.

"In order to avoid further deterioration of the situation and to protect lives and properties of citizens, I have directed the imposition of curfew on Jos North, Bassa and Jos South local govern-

ments commencing 6:00 p.m. to 6 a.m. from today, August 14, 2021.

"The curfew shall remain in place subject to further review by the State Security Council."

Governor Lalong, therefore, urged citizens to abide by the curfew and remain indoors to allow security agencies maintain law and order and deal with those bent on causing chaos in the state.

However, hours after announcing a dusk-to-dawn curfew in the three local government areas, the governor directed the imposition of a 24-hour curfew in Jos North to contain further security threats.

Also, the Operation Safe Haven (OPSH), in a statement signed by its spokesperson, Major Ishaku Takwa, said its troops rescued 36 victims of the attack, adding that they were in stable condition, while those hospitalised are responding to treatment.

It added that troops had also dominated Jos metropolis

with robust patrols and surveillance, adding that security checkpoints had been beefed up to enforce the curfew imposed on Jos North, Jos South and Bassa local government areas.

In the same vein, the authorities of the University of Jos have suspended the second-semester examination.

According to a statement signed by the university's Deputy Registrar, Information and Publication, Abdullahi Abdullahi, all examinations earlier scheduled between Monday, August 16 and Saturday, August 21, have been suspended until further notice.

The university, therefore, advised students residing in various hostels, both within and out the campuses to remain within their hostels of residence and avoid unnecessary movements.

In another development, the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Usman Alkali Baba on Sunday ordered the immediate deployment of Police In-

tervention Team to the state.

This was contained in a statement made available to newsmen in Abuja on Sunday by the Force Public Relations Officer (FPRO), Frank Mba.

According to the statement, the Police Intervention Team, being led by DIG Sanusi N. Lemu, the Deputy Inspector General of Police in charge of Finance and Administration, who is also the coordinating DIG, North-Central geo-political zone, "is to carry out on-the-spot assessment and ensure enhanced, coordinated response to protect the community and boost public confidence in the affected areas of the state."

The statement explained that team "comprises personnel of Police Tactical Units - the Police Mobile Force (PMF), Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU), Police Special Forces, investigators and covert operatives from the Force Criminal Investigations Department (FCID) and the Force Intelligence Bureau (FIB) respectively."

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Kidnap victim dies day after