

Gunmen burn nine family members to ashes in Plateau community, shoot two others

· Lalong orders security operatives to fish out perpetrators

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GUNMEN on Tuesday night stormed Bokkos Local Government Area of Plateau State and burnt nine family members to ashes inside their home, before shooting two other persons dead.

The youth president in the local government, Mr Marshal Sule, said the incident

occurred at Maikatako community.

Sule said the terrorists were suspected to be on a revenge mission when they stormed the community.

According to him, the terrorists arrived on motorcycles at about 11:00 p.m. and set fire to a house where a family of nine lived and ensured that the house was completely razed by the fire.

He added that while leav-

ing the community, the terrorists also shot two other persons dead.

He said the incident followed a prior attack where a vigilante was killed by a group suspected to be militiamen on Monday, adding that in retaliation, youths of the community mobilised for a counterattack and killed two of the attackers.

Sule said: "The [militia] threatened to retaliate and they eventually stormed

Maikatako on Tuesday, where 11 people were killed.

The incident has been reported to security agencies for prompt action."

Meanwhile, the state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Alfred Alabo, said the police were already on the trail of the assailants.

He said operatives of the command were on top of the situation.

Meanwhile, the state governor, Simon Bako Lalong,

has ordered security forces to go after the terrorists.

The governor, in a statement signed by his Director of Press and Public Affairs, Dr Makut Simon Macham, said the killers must be fished out and brought to justice.

He said the rising cases of attacks and destruction of farm crops, livestock and other properties within the general Bokkos area were becoming worrisome and must

be checked immediately.

While sympathising with the families of the victims, Governor Lalong reiterated that his administration would not allow terrorists and bandits take a foothold in any part of the state.

The Commander of *Operation Safe Haven* and General Officer Command (GOC) 3rd Division, Major-General Ibrahim Ali, has visited Maikatako village for an on-the-spot assessment.

1. Vigilante killed as operatives