

Gunmen kill community leader, seven others in Plateau

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MILITIAS terrorising Plateau communities struck again on Tuesday, killing a community leader, Agwom Mazat, in Bark-in-Ladi Local Government Area and seven others at Mangu and Riyom councils respectively.

A source close to Bark-in-Ladi council area told the *Nigerian Tribune* that the community leader was shot dead on Tuesday morning while working on his farm

with other people.

The source said: "The community leader, Agwom Mazat, was gunned down on his farm at about 8:35a.m. today [Tuesday]."

"The gunmen shot him at close range and made sure he died before they escaped from the scene. He was the only one killed, while other people working with him escaped.

"The entire Mazat community has been thrown into mourning; the attack was a big surprise to us. We want to believe that the militias had been monitoring

him and the community before they struck."

The militias had, on Monday, attacked Sohon Kareng community of Kareng District in Mangu Local Government at about 7:40 p.m. and held residents hostage for more than 30 minutes by shooting and destroying properties.

An eyewitness said five persons were killed in the attack, including a man and his wife.

The source added that the militias also set houses on fire and destroyed farms before they escaped.

It was gathered that the militias stormed the community through the Swan Water Bottling Company in Kerang.

Another set of militias also invaded Wereng-Camp and Wereng in Riyom Local Government, where two persons were killed on their farms.

It was learnt that the attackers raided the two communities simultaneously and killed the two persons identified as Nas Chuwang and Amos Dung, both of whom were 20 years of age, while 18 others were injured.

When contacted, spokesperson for the state police command, Alfred Alabo, said he had not been briefed about the attacks, just as he added that he would confirm from the divisional police officers (DPOs) in the affected areas.

He was, however, yet to get back as of the time of filing in this report.

Meanwhile, the coordinator of the Emancipation Centre for Crisis Victims in Nigeria (ECCV), Dalyop Solomon Mwantiri, has said attacks by militias had become a daily occurrence in

the state.

Mwantiri told the *Nigerian Tribune* that the silence of security agencies over the attacks only strengthens the resolve of the hoodlums to perpetrate more crime.

He said: "There has been no arrest of culprits, but when natives want to put up resistance to the attacks, they would be arrested.

"Apart from the killings, farms are also destroyed to inflict hunger on the people.

"From all indications, this is a deliberate plan to overrun some communities in Plateau State."