

# 17 killed, houses burnt in midnight attack on Plateau communities

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A midnight raid by armed militia on Mandung-Mushu and Kopnanle villages in Bokkos Local Government Area of Plateau State has left over 17 persons dead.

According to a statement by a pressure group in the locality, Bokkos Cultural Development Council (BCDC) Vanguard, and signed by its chairman, Farmasum Fudang, the militia launched the attack at about 12:45 am.

The group pointed out that the attack took place unhindered for more than two houses despite the presence of security forces in the local government.

It disclosed that eight people were killed at Kopnanle, adding that nine others were killed in Mandung-Mushu.

The group added that the

assailants set fire to homes and a place of worship and killed fleeing civilians, adding that most of those killed and wounded were attacked in their sleep or while running for their lives.

"This brazen attack, which predominantly targeted children, appears to be part of a calculated effort to instill fear and perpetrate further displacement within our communities. We condemn this act of terror, which we believe is aligned with a broader agenda to impose Sharia Law and seize control of our lands.

"Just hours before this tragedy unfolded, BCDC Vanguard submitted a petition to the Department of State Services (DSS), challenging a leaked memo that falsely accused our people of planning violence against some residents. We unequivocally stated that the intelligence behind the memo

was fabricated and defamatory.

"Despite our efforts to rectify these falsehoods, the security apparatus failed to protect our community from the very threats we highlighted. We are appalled by the apparent prioritisation of the lives of Fulani residents over our own and demand answers from the authorities."

The group further stated that the timing of the attack, following closely on the heels of the DSS's warning of an impending assault on certain communities, raises serious concerns about collusion or deliberate neglect.

All efforts to speak with the spokesman of Plateau State Police Command, DSP Alfred Alabo, proved abortive as he could not be reached on his mobile phone.

Meanwhile, Plateau State governor, Mr Caleb Mutfwang, has condemned the

attack he described as unfortunate and unacceptable at a time the government is working to facilitate the return of displaced persons to their homes.

The governor, in a statement signed by his Director of Press Affairs, Mr Gyang Bere, warned perpetrators to desist forthwith as the government is determined to fish them out to face justice.

While appreciating the intervention of security agencies in the protection of lives and property in the state, Governor Mutfwang urged them to redouble their efforts in discharging their constitutional responsibility of protecting innocent communities.

He expressed deep sympathy to the bereaved families and the affected communities and prayed for quick healing of those who sustained gunshot injuries.