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Gunmen sack Taraba village, kill 25



Boko Haram

The orgy of violence in the Northern part of the country continued on Monday night with gunmen setting the entire village of Andoyaku in the Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba State ablaze.

Twenty-five persons lost their lives to the incident which forced nearly all the residents to flee their homes.

As news of the violence spread, some parents of the abducted female students of the Government Girls' Secondary School, Chibok in Borno State, said that Boko Haram insurgents had threatened to kill them and their daughters if they failed to stop their search for the girls.

It was however not known as of 8pm on Tuesday if the gunmen involved in the Wukari attack were Fulani cattle rustlers, who had in the past engaged in clashes with the Jukun.

The Acting Governor of the state, Alhaji Garba Umar, who confirmed the development to journalists in Jalingo on Tuesday, expressed regret that violence was recurring in the state.

He said that it had become imperative to update the people on the security situation in the state which he described as "worrisome."

"As you are aware, insurgency has assumed the dimension of a national crisis as it now affects more than 15 states in the northern part of the country," Umar said.

According to him, since fresh clashes began in the state, the government has taken a number of measures to ensure that they are contained.

These, he said included, security meetings involving traditional rulers, setting up of peace committees in LGAs, deployment of senior civil servants in their areas to assist in the promotion of peace and the provision of relief materials to the affected people.

The acting governor added that the state had received additional troops to bring the situation under control and to reduce the immediate hardship of the people in the affected areas.

Umar said, "It has become imperative to appeal to all the warring factions to lay down their arms and embrace peace. We shall continue to work with all the communities and law enforcement agencies to restore peace to our state."

He disclosed that 29 trailers laden with relief materials had been sent to Wukari, Takum, Gindin

Dorowa/Gassol.

The state government has however set up a peace committee to reconcile the warring Jukun and the Fulani in Wukari.

The development came at a time stakeholders in the southern part of the state had accused the acting governor of abandoning the road map which ailing Governor Danbaba Suntai had used in maintaining the peace among the people of the state.

Members of the peace committee are Alhaji Bala Ahmed, Senator Ibrahim Goje and Alhaji Iliyasu Mu'azu.

The committee has already visited the scenes of the clashes to ascertain the level of destruction and assistance needed by the displaced people.

The team expressed shock at the level of destruction and killings particularly in Sabon Gida, Wurojam and Wunyo, Gwilman Kogi and many Tiv settlements near San Sani and Wuro Jam. But the stakeholders, in their statement signed by Manu Benjamin Caleb, Daniel Danbu, Atoshi Samuelson, Danladi, Greg Terlumun Tor, Ezekiel Yusuf, Abubakar Dan-Atiku, Irimiya Edward Rimande, Hajiya Asmau Sansani and Hajiya Nana, expressed sadness that in spite of the increase in the security vote of the state by Umar from N80m to N200m, insecurity in the state had yet to abate.

"The ongoing mayhem is a well worked out blueprint to destabilise the zone and institute a reign of terror, especially now that it is clear the zone is ready to produce the next governor in 2015," they said in the statement.

The stakeholders noted that while Suntai was known for restoring peace to a once-troubled state, Umar had failed to tread the path of his boss.

They added, "Suntai achieved the feat by encouraging harmony among the people and by being fair and just with the entire groups, irrespective of religion or ethnic background.

"Suntai was also the grandmaster of swift response to skirmishes. Normally, Suntai would not even allow a situation to get out of hand before reacting. He was adept at getting to the root cause of any crisis through intense dialogue and consultation, thus nipping it in the bud.

"By enlisting the assistance of groups and community leaders, he achieved a lot in promoting peace. Even as a Christian, Suntai was closer to Muslims and he made them feel at home."

Meanwhile, some parents of the abducted Chibok schoolgirls have told the Hausa service of the *British Broadcasting Corporation* that they had hired 100 commercial motorcycle riders (*Okada* riders) to intensify the search for their children.

The parents whose identities were not given by the *BBC*, added that they had received threats from Boko Haram terrorists that they and their daughter would be killed if they continued with their search for the pupils.

They lamented that the *okada* riders hired who combed the Sambisa Forest near Cameroon returned without finding the girls.

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