

# 3 killed in Plateau, Lalong vows to sign death penalty for kidnappers

From **Gyang Bere**, Jos

**NO** fewer than three persons have been reportedly killed by gunmen at Rafin Bauna in Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau State.

~~It was gathered that the victims were ambushed and killed by their assailants.~~

Plateau State Governor, Simon Lalong, in a press statement signed by Director of Press and Public Affairs, Makut Simon Macham, condemned the attack and urged security operatives to unmask the perpetrators.

The governor described the attack as yet another callous attempt by the enemies of peace to begin the new year with violence, saying that the government would resist such attempts with all resources available to it.

He said that security report available to him indicated that the victims were on their way from Dutsen Kura to Rafin Bauna when they were ambushed and killed by the assailants who are still at large.

Lalong has, therefore, charged security agencies to conduct a thorough investigation and ensure that the

assailants are fished out and brought to justice, as the state government was more than ever committed to making life difficult for criminals.

He sympathised with the

families of the victims and assured them that justice would be done.

Meanwhile, he has warned kidnappers to leave the state as anyone who caught and

convicted for kidnapping would face the death penalty.

He was speaking at the Catholic Cathedral, Shendam, where he reassured the citizens of the State that the

Government would increase its fight against all kinds of crimes, especially kidnapping which has become a greater threat to peace and security of the citizens.

## Residents cry for help as herdsmen sack Edo community

From **Tony Osauzo**, Benin

**SUSPECTED** Fulani herdsmen dressed in military uniform have reportedly sacked a farming community, 2nd Abumere Ojigbelu Camp, in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State.

They were said to have chased the villagers away and took over their farms, homes and properties.

Some of the villagers who ran away for their lives and are now taking refuge in other communities around Okada have cried out for help.

One of the victims, Mr. Mattu Alli, from Taraba State, while narrating his ordeal, said: "In fact I'm short of words to explain what I witnessed yesterday in our community. I have been here for the past 20 years with my family farming.

"I was in my compound with my family having a good time when we started hearing the sound of guns and people running in different direc-

tions. I saw a Benin man running towards my compound and I asked him where he was running to, he said herdsmen had taken over the village, chasing people away from their houses.

"So, I called my wife and we had to run for our dear lives. I did not see my children as everyone of us ran in different directions. As I speak to you now, I don't know the whereabouts of my wife and children.

"Another thing that put fear into our minds is that one of the Fulani herdsmen pointed a gun at me and said, 'Look man, we are for peace, we will only kill you people if you refuse to allow our cows to feed on your crops.

"The yams you people have are for our cows, the cassava and all that you have are for our cows. If you people touch our cows we will kill everybody in this village.' For us to be safe, we ran to the next community," Alli said.

Speaking in the same vein to journalists, another victim, Mr. Sunday Chimen, said: "I have been in this village for over 20 years farming what we saw yesterday surprised us. Suddenly, we heard gunshots and people running. We later discovered that Fulani herdsmen had taken over our community. They were armed with sophisticated weapons, including AK-47 rifles and

threatening to kill us if we didn't cooperate with them. For us to be alive, we decided to run for our dear lives, leaving our properties behind. Some of us have not seen their children as we ran to different directions. Our children have runned to unknown places. We are calling on the security agencies to come to our aid as our community is under siege".

(Continued on www.newswatch)

## New Year shocker: Woman dumps newborn baby in airplane toilet bin

**AIRPORT** staff in Mauritius have found a newborn baby boy abandoned in the rubbish bin in the toilet of a plane.

A 20-year-old woman from Madagascar, suspected to have given birth on the flight, was arrested.

The Air Mauritius plane, which arrived from Madagascar, landed at Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Air-

port on January 1.

Airport officials made the discovery when they screened the plane for a routine customs check.

They rushed the baby to a public hospital for treatment. The woman suspected of being the child's mother, who initially denied that the boy was hers, was made to undergo a medical examination which confirmed that she had just given birth.