

Gunmen kill 9 family members in Plateau

...Lalong orders security to fish out killers

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From Gyang Bere, Jos

No fewer than 9 members of a family were killed by gunmen in Maikatako community of Bokkos Local Government Area of Plateau State on Tuesday.

It was gathered that the gunmen stormed the community in the night and started shooting sporadically, leaving nine people dead. A community member confirmed that the incident occurred at about 9:30am when the villagers were going to sleep.

The state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Alfred Alabo, confirmed the incident and said police were going after the assailants. He noted that the police were on top of the situation, working round the clock to track the perpetrators, adding that details of the sad incident would be made public.

Meanwhile, Governor Simon Lalong has ordered security forces to go after the terrorists.

Lalong, in a statement, yesterday, condemned the attack and said the killers must be fished out and brought to justice for the dastardly act. He said the rising attacks and destruction of farm crops, livestock and other properties within the general Bokkos area is becoming worrisome and must be checked immediately.

While sympathising with the families of the victims, the governor reiterated that his administration will not allow terrorists and bandits to take foothold in any part of the state, as all security agencies have been directed to be firm and hard on any person or groups behind the criminal acts. He, again, appealed to communities to always be security conscious and report any suspicious movements to the security agencies for immediate action, particularly during the forthcoming yuletide season.

Also, the Commander, Operation Safe Haven and GOC 3rd Armoured Division, Maj. Gen. Ibrahim Ali, paid an on-the-spot assessment to Maikatako village, where he inspected the houses burnt and properties destroyed. Having received briefing from the Sector Commander on the nature of the attack and efforts made to counter the terrorists, he commended the troops and the community vigilantes for their quick intervention which prevented further losses.

Apart from ordering the deployment of more troops, the STF Commander directed the troops to pursue the fleeing terrorists and ensure that they are apprehended, in line with the directive of the governor and president.

Gen. Ali also commiserated with the families of victims and the entire community, asking them not to take the law into their hands by engaging in reprisals. He assured them that the security forces will not relent in ensuring that the people get justice.

The Chairman, Bokkos Local Government, Joseph Guluwa, Commissioner for Higher Education, Prof. Barnard Matur, former chairman, Bokkos LGA, Luka Makut, were all at the community to sympathise with them.