

Gov Lalong gives reason for killings in Plateau

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Plateau State Governor Simon Lalong

• Promises to deal with criminals

From **John Adams**, Minna

The Plateau State Governor, Simon Bako Lalong, has attributed the recent massacre in parts of the state to his near exit from power, saying that his administration has in the last eight years addressed security challenges in the state to it barest minimum.

The governor, however, said his administration was capable of handling the criminals who were beginning to perpetrate evil in communities across the state before leaving office on May 29, 2023.

The governor who was reacting to the recent attacks by unknown gunmen in Mangun Local Government Area of the state which left over 117 people dead, several people injured and 20,000 people displaced, disclosed that the criminals had started resurfacing because he was about to take his exit from office.

The governor spoke with newsmen on Saturday shortly after he was conferred with an honorary doctorate degree at the 4th convocation ceremony of the Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University (IBBU), Lapai, Niger State.

He declared that his government would not fold its hands to see its citizens killed, maimed and displaced, adding that “in the past eight years, I have restored peace in the Plateau; unfortunately I am taking my exit and the criminals are beginning to rear their heads again,

and I am capable of handling them before I take my exit and I will continue to pray for peace in Plateau.”

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On the measures so far taken, the governor said: “We have nipped insecurity in the bud. Our security agencies are already addressing the recent issue of insecurity. The IDPs are being taken care of and we have jets flying all over the affected communities and local government areas.”

Speaking on his award, Lalong appreciated the state government for honoring him and other awardees with the prestigious doctorate degrees, saying that they would be good ambassadors of the institution, and would continue to uphold themselves with dignity, integrity and excellence.

Meanwhile the university has offered automatic employment to the two overall best graduating students.

The Vice-Chancellor Professor Abu Kasim Adamu who announced this at the convocation ground, said the two students would be employed as graduate assistants and would be trained up to the PhD level.

The two overall best-graduating students included the best-graduating student in the 2019/2020 academic session, Mohammed Aisha Egbako of the Department of Animal Production with a CGPA of 4.85, and the overall best-graduating student in the 2020/2021 academic session, Yahaya Mahmud Baba of the Department of Food Science and Technology with a CGPA of 4.90.

According to the vice chancellor, 37 students would be awarded First Class degrees, 954 students would be awarded Second Class Upper, 3,283 students with Second Class Lower, 1,518 students with Third Class, and 17 students with Pass.

Adamu said that the university was graduating 6,154 students out of which 5,719 were undergraduates while 435 were postgraduates.