

Three killed, many injured as IDPs burn LG secretariat, 19 vehicles

● Stop the killings says Buhari

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Three persons feared killed and many injured yesterday after hundreds of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), who had taken refuge in Tsafe Local Government Area of Zamfara State, set the local government secretariat on fire while protesting poor security condition.

The protesters as early as 6:30a.m., blocked all the entrances and exits of the major road linking Zamfara to Zaria, Sokoto, Kebbi, Kaduna and Kano states. They called on relevant authorities to do the needful by containing the criminal activities in the state, particularly the killings of citizens.

This was even as President Muhammadu Buhari, yesterday, condemned the killing of Nigerians in Birnin Magaji community in Tsafe Local Government Area and Magami community in Faru District of Maradun Local Government Area of Zamfara State.

Zamfara State has continued to be in the news because of different violent crimes. The latest was the shooting and killing of 20 people, who were praying in a mosque.

Meanwhile, the continual killings in the state force IDPs to ground commercial activities in Tsafe town.

The situation in Tsafe town was tensed for over three hours before law enforcement agencies rushed to the scene to control the situation.

When our correspondent visited Tsafe town, it was gathered that the protesters, aside from setting the secretariat ablaze, also burnt 19 vehicles and motorcycles parked within the local government council.

An eye witness claimed: "Three of the protesters died after being hit by stray bullets from security agents. Many people sustained injuries as security agents used



Some of the burnt vehicles



smoke and other tactical methods to control the situation."

Journalists who visited hospital, where the corpses were deposited, saw the three deceased. They also saw injured protesters receiving treatment at the hospital.

The Tsafe Local Government chairman, Alhaji Aliyu Abubakar (MC), said the whole issue was politically motivated. He added that the protest was organised by some elites who hide under the IDPs to cause violence in Tsafe town.

His words: "In fact, the IDPs were instigated by some political elites of the opposition within the local government who always wanted to be leaders by all means."

While calling the people in the

area to remain calm, Abubakar also reassured members of the community that peace will remain in the council, stressing that those that caused the violence would be brought to book.

Reacting to the incident, the Zamfara State Police command denied that IDPs were involved in Tsafe protest. The command also stated that 23 people have been arrested in connection with the protest and weapons recovered from them. The Command denied that anyone was shot or killed.

The Zamfara State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Mohammed Shehu, said that the state Commissioner of Police, Usman A. Beleg, a Brigade Commander and

with two live cartridges.

The image maker said that patrol has been intensified in the area after which the suspects would be charged to

other heads of security agencies visited Tsafe in the early hours of yesterday to assess the security situation.

Shehu said that the command has deployed additional units of PMF/CTU and conventional police personnel along with Police Special Forces on Tsafe to complement efforts of those on ground.

Shehu added: "Normalcy has been restored in Tsafe and its environs. The police and other security agencies are in total control of the situation with regular patrol and continuous raiding of identified criminal hideouts ongoing."

The Senior Special Assistant on Media and Publicity to the President, Garba Shehu, in a statement, said that President Buhari has described the incidents as "horrendous acts of violence crimes against humanity. 'This violence must stop!'"

While expressing his deepest condolences to the families of those killed in the attacks, the government and people of Zamfara State, the President also wished those injured a speedy recovery.

The President, who has authorised an assessment trip to Zamfara and Sokoto states by the Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshall Abubakar Baba Sadiq on Christmas and Boxing days, reassured residents of states plagued by banditry, including Zamfara, Sokoto, Kaduna, Niger and Taraba, that their safety was an enduring commitment of his administration.

Buhari said that he would continue to ensure that security agencies work round the clock to protect local populations.

"To this end, a major operation by the Nigerian Armed Forces, Police, Department of State Services and the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps, is being considered to restore peace and stability in the region," said the President.

He conveyed his strong support to the Nigeria Police Force, which has already deployed Special Forces in each of the local government in Zamfara State and the Defence Headquarters' deployment of a Special Military Intervention Force comprising more than 1,000 personnel to respond to the security challenges

st three robbery suspects

different locations in Nkpor and Obosi between Sunday

Nkpor in Idemili South Local Government Area of Anambra