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10 Killed in Fresh Jos Attacks

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The tentative peace recently achieved in Jos, Plateau State, has again been put asunder by violence that erupted yesterday morning in Mazah village, Jos North Local Government Area. The attack left at least 10 people dead and several others injured, the Plateau State Government has said.

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"The attack is nothing unusual; it is just another attempt to destroy the peace Plateau people have been enjoying in the past months," the Commissioner for Information and Communication, Mr. Gregory Yenlong said. He said that those injured were being treated at the Plateau Specialist Hospital

"It is an embarrassing situation. Just when we thought we had found peace, we suddenly have to cope with another ugly situation." he said.

The Commissioner, who appealed to the people to remain calm, and not to take the law into their hands, called for more vigilance from the military Special Task Force (STF) to prevent a recurrence.

A number of houses were also burnt, while others, including the Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN) located in the village were vandalised. But this time, the natives of the village are not the Beroms as in the previous attacks, but the Anagutas. "We are just coming out of the village; it is a difficult terrain really. There isn't much to say. This incident is just sad," Lt-Col. Kingsley Umoh, spokesman for the Military Special Task Force (STF) charged with maintaining peace in Jos, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN).

Plateau State Police Commissioner Gregory Anyating told Reuters the authorities were trying to find out "the root causes of the violence", but it had not spread to other villages.

The incident, which occurred at about 1:30 am, according to sources, claimed the life of the father of the councilor of the Mazah ward, Hon. Kankani Jaja. The Pastor of the COCIN, Rev. Nuhu Dawat, also lost his wife, two children, and a

Narrating his experience. Dawat said "It was at about 1:30 am when I heard a knock on my door. I went and opened the door but did not see anybody, so I went back into the house. A few minutes later we started hearing sporadic gun shots. It was then I escaped into the farmland near my house, but my family was not fortunate enough to escape too. My wife, daughter, son and grandson have all been killed".

Another resident of the village, Mr Gaya Suna, who narrated his ordeal said the attackers came with such a bright torchlight that they could locate where their victims hid. He was however able to escape with his wife but his daughter was killed. He said "People were sleeping when we heard some movement. We cannot say exactly why they came to attack us".

The Community leader of Mazah, Mr Abamu Kaiwa, who spoke with THISDAY said "This incident occured between 1 and 2am, they came in with some weapons and attacked some targeted houses. The personal house and family house of the Councilor representing Mazah ward in the Council, Hon. Kankani Jaja, were burnt, his father and son killed"

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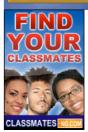
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