

# 17 killed in Plateau, Bauchi, Zamfara in renewed violence

●Anti-riot policeman, 28 other suspects arrested

BY TAYE OBATERU

**JOS** — SECTARIAN violence that has been ravaging the northern part of the country continued yesterday as 17 people were killed in separate incidents in Plateau, Bauchi and Zamfara states

At least 12 people were again killed when suspected Fulani herdsmen attacked villages around Dorowa Babuje in Barakin Ladi Local Government Area of Plateau State early yesterday ostensibly in search of their stolen cattle.

However, two of the Fulani men were shot in an exchange of fire with men of the Special Task Force who responded promptly to the distress call from the village while 29 of them were arrested.

Spokesman for the task force, Capt. Charles Ekeocha, who paraded the arrested 29 to journalists said an anti-riot policeman serving in Abuja was one of those arrested.

"He gave his particulars as Serial Number 220015 and his name as Corporal Mohammed Uba, of 44 Police Mobile Force, Abuja. He was arrested with a sickle, four life cartridges in his pocked, a box of matches and a catapult.

"One of our soldiers was also shot during the operation, and he is currently receiving treatment. Two AK-47 rifles, two locally made revolver pistols, and several quantities of live ammunition of different calibre were also recovered from the Fulani marauders," he said.

The villages attacked include Nding Susut where two people were killed, Nding Jok where one person was killed, Fan Loh, three and Dorowa where eight deaths were said to have been recorded, according to the villagers.

The state Commissioner of Police, Mr. Abdulrahman Akanò, who also confirmed the incident said an arrangement was already on

with the chairman of the local government to go round with security men in search of the stolen cows before the attack.

**4 die in Bauchi, police officer killed guarding election site**

A fight over a game of billiards disintegrated into religious violence in Bauchi, leaving at least four people dead among the smouldering ruins of churches and mosques, authorities said yesterday.

The attack in the town of Tafawa Balewa in Bauchi State came the same day police said members of a radical Muslim sect killed a police officer guarding a voter registration site. The attack showed the continuing ability of members of the *Boko Haram* sect to kill at will despite a military and police crackdown, leaving a state police commissioner to

admit he cannot guarantee the safety of election officials.

The violence also comes ahead of April elections that many worry could ignite simmering ethnic and religious tensions in a country that became a democracy only a decade ago.

In Tafawa Balewa, the home of Nigeria's assassinated first Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the violence started Wednesday night, said Borno State police Muhammed Indabawa. Indabawa said a group of youths playing billiards got into an argument, which sparked violence in a town familiar to riots between Nigeria's two main faiths.

Paramilitary police patrolled the city's streets yesterday as mosques, churches and homes sat destroyed, Indabawa said. The commissioner said he believed soldiers also would join the security crackdown.

## Public debt up by 36%

He added that this indicated strength for the countries debt portfolio, the external debts were booked on favourable terms, and this is very important as the projects financed with the proceeds of the debt have long gestation.

Tuesday called for restraint on debt-financed government spending, saying this fuels inflation and impedes flow of credit to the private sector.

In its review of the economy in 2010, the MPC noted that while credit to the three tiers of government

"To counter the effect of this recession on the economy, governments over the world increased borrowing to increase spending. And that was what happened in Nigeria and what was responsible for the increase in the domestic debt between 2008 and

Gunmen suspected to be members of an Islamist sect opened fire on police guarding voter registration equipment at a school in Gussau, killing one officer, authorities said yesterday.

Officers engaged in a shootout with the gunmen for about five minutes but were

➤ **Islamists' kill cop, injure another in Gusau**