

# Family of 8 killed in fresh Jos violence

**J**OS the Plateau State capital was again thrown into mourning and confusion yesterday as early morning attacks by suspected Fulani herdsmen at Tatu village of Barkin Ladi led to the death of a family of eight.

Yesterday's killing came less than a week Muslim and Christian faithful clashed in Jos North. At least seven persons were killed while several others were injured in the clash. Before the clash which took place on a sallah day four persons were days earlier killed in a violent attacks by alleged Muslim faithful.

In yesterday's gruesome

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# JOS: Family of 8 killed

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said to have been heavily armed struck at the residence of Mr. Chollom Nangup Gyang at Tatu village around midnight while they were deep asleep, killing him, his wife and six children.

A similar attack on another family in Heipang sometime back also left a man and six members of his family dead.

The attack in Heipang came just as a bomb was discovered at the centre of a market in Riyom and was detonated by the police anti-bomb unit before it exploded.

An account said the Improvised Explosive Device (IED) was planted at the market by unknown persons and was discovered by an elderly man who found a container with a clock in it and got curious.

The police were later called in following which it was discovered to be a bomb and was successfully detonated before it could cause any damage.

Chairman of Barkin Ladi Local Government Area, Mr. Emmanuel Loman who visited the residence of the attacked family yesterday pointed accusing fingers at Fulanis from a neighboring village.

"We are suspecting the Fulanis in this attack because this is their route and apart from that, the Fulanis that live in nearby Mahanger village are heavily armed and I have been crying out to government to go to the village in search for arms but the government is not acting on my request. You can see that the guns used to attack the residents in this place are sophisticated weapons. Government should do something fast before the next attack on another family; government should go in there and recover all arms

stocked there", he said.

He described the wiping out of another family shortly after a similar attack some weeks back as worrisome, adding, "this kind of attack aimed at an entire family is the second in less than a month in my local government. What is going on is beyond words; it is barbaric and inhuman for someone or group of people to embark on a killing spree of this magnitude".

The state Commissioner for Information, Mr. Yiljap Abraham who also visited the scene of the attack expressed the regret of the state government over the incident and called on the people to be more vigilant to avoid a recurrence.

He told newsmen that government was sad that violence had continued in spite of efforts to restore peace. No matter the number of military and police personnel, they are not enough to protect everyone. So government is calling on community and religious leaders and politicians to enlighten their people to help themselves.

"Arrangements should be made to protect the people; let people take measures to safeguard lives and property in every community," he said.

Yiljap, however, tasked the various communities and ethnic groups to adopt dialogue, saying that dialogue still remained the best solution to the lingering crisis.

Capt. Charles Ekeocha, the Spokesman of the military Special Task Force (STF) maintaining security in Plateau, in his reaction to the attacks, said that the STF had no business with the area. He explained that the STF withdrew its men after the communities in the area said they did not want them.

He said: "The security of that area is not the concern of the STF; they have said that we are responsible for the attacks. In fact, officials from the army headquarters came and investigated the claims of the communities and we are still awaiting the outcome of their findings.

"They have always accused our men of the attacks, so I do not know who could have attacked them now that our men have been withdrawn."

Reminded that the STF was in charge of security in the entire Plateau, Ekeocha agreed, but quickly added that soldiers were not in charge of that specific area since they had been accused of masterminding the attacks over time.

"There was even a time they claimed to have picked military ID cards at the scene of such attacks. So we are out of their area. I suggest you contact the police or the Plateau-owned security outfit, Operation Rainbow," he said.

Meanwhile, church services held peacefully but amidst heavy security in most churches in the state capital following reports of a planned attack on churches which made many adherents to shun service.

Text messages of a plan to make the day a bloody Sunday and alleged importation of mercenaries to carry out the attack were sent out to people until late Saturday with an advice to spread the warning, a situation which instilled fear in many residents.

However, a nine-member security committee has been set up by the Jamaatu Nasir Islam and the Council of Ulama to educate residents of Jos metropolis on the importance of peaceful co-existence.

Chairman of the committee, Abdulmalik Aminu told journalists that it has swung into action and has visited various security agencies to brief them of its mission.

He said the committee was also educating the youths against attacking security personnel in the course of their duty as happened recently and to see the attainment of peace as a collective responsibility.

## STF soldiers get mandate to shoot on sight

In a related development, following rampant shooting of its men in Jos, the military Special Task Force (STF),

has mandated soldiers to shoot on sight, any one carrying or using arms on others. "The STF is now mandated to use all the necessary force within its powers on anybody carrying and using arms or dangerous weapons on another person," its spokesman said.

The spokesman, Charles Ekeocha in a statement in Jos yesterday warned the youths against "testing the might of the soldiers", saying that whoever did that would be doing so at his or her peril.

Ekeocha disclosed that three soldiers shot by the youths were lying critically ill in the hospital, and regretted that they were gunned down by people they were supposed to protect.

According to him, "everywhere in the state is infested with weapons, with sporadic shots heard both day and night. The sporadic shooting by the Muslim and Christian youths, is also targeted at the soldiers," he regretted, and advised politicians, traditional rulers, religious leaders and parents to counsel their wards. "The soldiers are no more prepared to turn the other cheek," he warned.

Ekeocha, however, urged the people of the state to go about their normal activities as the STF and other security agencies were prepared to protect them.

## Gunmen shot dead Islamic scholar in Maiduguri

In another related story, a local Islamic scholar was yesterday morning shot dead by some unidentified gunmen in Zannari, an outskirt of Maiduguri, the Borno state capital.

It was gathered that the scholar who was simply identified as Mallam Dala was shot dead by two unidentified gunmen at his residence around 11am in the morning.

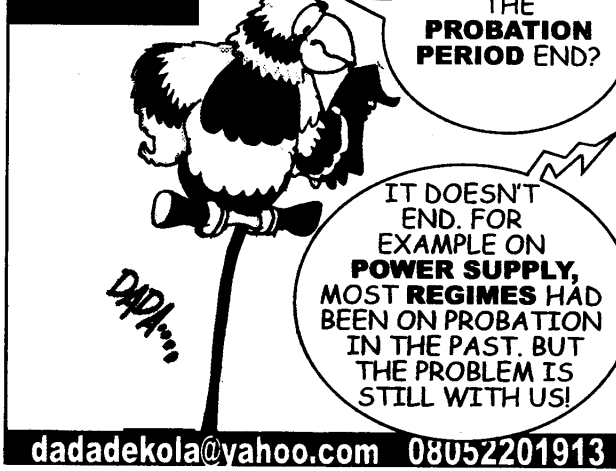
One Mallam Isa, an eye witness told our reporter that the gunmen came in a Peugeot 504 salon car which they parked behind a nearby bush in the area before they stormed the mallam's house.

The witness also said that an attempt had earlier been made on the life of the scholar who owns a local Islamic Sangaya school attended by Almajiri students two weeks ago.

Our reporter also gathered that the mallam was shot on the head while struggling to escape to his room. The gunmen were said to have fled the area after the incident and left their victim in a pool of his blood.

Borno police commissioner, Simeon

**PROBATION BEFORE NIGERIANS -JONATHAN**



Midenda confirmed the killing to our reporter on phone but said the man was not an Islamic scholar. According to him, he was just an ordinary man in the community who might have had issue to settle with his killers.

CP Midenda said

investigation has commenced to unravel the perpetrators of the dastardly act, even as he assured the general public that the command was doing everything possible to protect lives and property in the state.

## KATSINA-ALU VS SALAMI: Crisis in judiciary portends grave danger —Justice Oputa

**BYOGBONNAAMADI**

**R**ETIRED Supreme Court Justice, Chukwudifu Oputa has lamented the crisis of confidence rocking the judiciary in the country which culminated in the removal of the President of the Court of Appeal, Justice Ayo Salami by President Goodluck Jonathan, describing it as most unfortunate and most embarrassing.

In an exclusive interview with Vanguard, Justice Oputa who was fondly referred to as the Socrates of the apex court while he was on the bench argued that the judicial system presently needs sanitization

Said he:

"What is happening in the judiciary is most unfortunate and most embarrassing. It is a happening that could never ever have been imagined in our days. The judiciary is however a part of the Nigerian polity. It is therefore naturally reflecting the general decay that unfortunately permeates the entire system for some time now.

"However what happens in the judiciary raises more dust and poses more danger because the judiciary is supposed to be the citadel of rectitude and the bastion of law and order. The last hope for a nation state melts away when corruption and politics also engulf the very core of law interpretation and enforcement.

"Much wisdom, maturity and patriotism are needed to handle the delicate equation that has developed. Certainly the judicial system needs serious sanitization. Sometimes I despair. With

the general breakdown in morality how can there be hope that the judiciary will be run by Nigerians who will continue to resist mounting temptation from our corrupt environment.

"What is happening is ominous and portends grave dangers. Its capacity to disrupt must not be underrated".

While refraining from apportioning blame on the crisis, Justice Oputa advised that "all those in responsible positions must close rank to fight corruption and indiscipline with relentless wherever it is found no matter whose ox is gored. This we must do for the stability and forward march of our nation".

According to him, "without interpretation and enforcement there could be no law and without law there could be no order and without order there could be no system. What can stem a collapse once it starts if the judiciary cannot command respect? May the gun never again become our arbiter".

Regretting that money has become a god which many people now worship in the society, Justice Oputa however gave kudos to the government for the salary review in the judiciary saying, "I was happy that the salary review had finally been done. For those of us of the old order, what gave us satisfaction was the competence we were able to bring to bear in our duties. Money had not become the deity it seems to be for this present generation.

"Luckily there was no inflation in the economy and no exaggerated life styles so the little take home we had, still afforded us a comfortable and respected life".

## TAKE HEART BYELLA RANDLE

*The heart that gives...gathers— Hannah Moore—*

What makes every day a new way of living; it is the feelings that come in knowing that every moment is a renewal of the heart. I thought of you reading these words, a beautiful Soul striving to live your life's purpose and being the best you can.

And from the innermost of my heart came a soft bubble of laughter and delight in the recognition of another being like me: I have known you, since before the beginning without end as sparks of light we dwell in the boundless ocean of divine love. Think of the lives you have touched in many ways for that is our purpose to give and to love.

Every experience fills the heart with gratitude for your presence in life. You are relevant in the grand scheme of things.

In all our years, there is the pain of life and the joys of life, but every experience is a gift and every day is a beautiful song. For you are loved so greatly and may life's boundless blessings light your candle more brightly with joy, laughter, bliss and a bond of love ever more intensely.