

Plateau killings: Death toll hits 130 as CAN warns against reprisal



By Lumionus Jannamike & Marie-Therese Nanlong, Abuja

The Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN, yesterday warned against reprisal attacks over the continued killings in Mangu and Riyom Local Government Areas of Plateau State.

According to CAN, about 130 persons have been killed in the past week, 1,000 buildings burnt and 22 villages affected.

The President of CAN, Archbishop Daniel Okoh, who gave the warning in a statement in Abuja, said: “It is with deep concern that I address the nation on the recent resurgence of mindless killings of innocent citizens in Mangu and Riyom Local Government Areas of Plateau State, Nigeria.

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“The killings, which started in Mangu villages on Monday, May 15, 2023, by so-called unknown gunmen have claimed many lives and property with many persons still missing.

“The villages affected include Fungzai, Hale, Kubwat, Bwoi and many other communities of the Kombun District of Mangu Local Government Area and some communities in the Riyom Local Government Area.

“According to reports, about 130 people were killed, about 1,000 buildings burnt and about 22 villages affected. We condemn these barbaric acts in the strongest terms possible. It is disheartening to see innocent citizens being killed and their properties destroyed in such a gruesome manner.

“While we appreciate the efforts of the security forces to maintain peace, we call on the government and law enforcement agencies to bring the perpetrators of these heinous acts to justice and to ensure the protection of lives and property of all citizens.

“As a religious leader, I implore all parties involved to embrace peace and dialogue as a means of resolving their differences.

Violence only begets more violence and we must break this cycle if we are to build a peaceful and prosperous society.”

4 killed in Sunday night attack

Meanwhile, four men were on Sunday night shot and killed at the Daika town, Panyam district of Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State.

Although no security agency confirmed the development as the Police Public Relations Officer, Alfred Alabo, did not pick his call at press time, a resident,

Manasseh Bamshak, said the incident happened at 11p.m.

It will be recalled that following repeated attacks in many communities in the council, residents have been making efforts to protect their homes as they keep vigil to prevent further killings.

He said: “Four young men were shot and killed in front of their homes about 11p.m., on Sunday, at Daika town. Some Fulani militias were passing on a motorbike on the Mangu-Panyam Road and they opened fire and killed them. Among those killed were Musa Dapada and three others.”

Natives chide MACBAN for distorting facts

Meanwhile, Director of Public Affairs, Mwaghavul Development Association, MDA, Da Lawrence Kyarshik has chided the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders’ Association of Nigeria, MACBAN, over its position on the ongoing attacks in Mwaghavul land. MDA is the umbrella body for the indigenous tribe of Mangu council.

Kyarshik, while reacting to MACBAN’s letter to governments and security agencies, alleging a “genocidal mission against Fulani communities in Plateau State,” said the said letter was “the clear intention of the leadership of MACBAN to mischievously delude the general public in order to cover up their sustained genocidal atrocities against the peace-loving ethnic nationalities on the Plateau. “Ordinarily, we wouldn’t have responded to MACBAN’s letter because it is an unintelligent mumbling, and more importantly, because we are still mourning the loss of our loved ones in the most planned and coordinated genocidal attacks on the Mwaghavul nation by Fulani terrorist herdsman, obviously led by MACBAN. “However, due to the deliberate false allegations raised in the letter against the Mwaghavul nation and the clear intention of the leadership of MACBAN to mischievously delude the general public in order to cover up their sustained genocidal atrocities against the peace-loving ethnic nationalities on the Plateau, especially the one they are currently executing against the Mwaghavul nation, it is crucially important to respond to it, in order to correctly contextualize the issues.

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