



21 killed in fresh attacks on 2 Plateau communities

• *Mutfwang, BYM, Media Network call for calm*

1 By Marie-Therese Nanlong

JOS — NO fewer than 21 persons have been confirmed killed in two communities, Batin and Rayogot in the Heipang district, Barkin Ladi Local Government Area of Plateau State.

A breakdown shows that 17 were killed in Batin, four in Rayogot while seven others sustained injuries.

Spokesman of the state Police command, Alfred Alabo, and that of Operation Safe Haven, OpSH, Captain James Oya, didn't confirm the incident as both did not pick up their calls at press time, but Governor Caleb Mutfwang and the leadership of the Berom Youth Moulders Movement, BYM, confirmed it.

The governor in a statement by his Director of Press and Public Affairs, Gyang Bere, expressed sadness over the incident.

He said: "Governor Mutfwang is deeply saddened by the bloody attack that claimed several lives in Heipang community of Barkin-Ladi Local Government Area. He also strongly condemned the recent attacks on some villages in Mangu Local Government Area of the state, where more lives were lost.

"The governor appealed to security agencies to redouble their efforts and put an end to the senseless killings of innocent people in the rural communities of Mangu and Barkin-Ladi. He emphasized the importance of peace and unity among all citizens, regardless of faith or ethnicity, for the development and growth of the state.

"He expressed his sympathy to the affected communities and families of the deceased, assuring them of the government's commitment to addressing the issues."

that may escalate tensions further. Let us unite as a community and channel our energies towards supporting the victims' families and assisting the injured on their path to recovery.

"We implore the relevant authorities to take swift and decisive action to ensure the

Our officers were not arrested by IGP task force — Immigration

By Godwin Oritse & Esther Onyegbula

LAGOS—The Seme Border Command of Nigeria Immigration Service and Lagos State Border Patrol Command, Seme said their officers on Lagos Badagry expressway were not arrested by the Inspector General of Police Special Squad as reported in the media.

Public Relations Officer, Seme Command, Enoch Aparahe, yesterday, said men of the two commands were on their lawful points on Badagry Seme expressway.

Aparahe said the attention of the two commands were drawn to yesterday's publication in the media, that the IGP task

safety and security of our citizens. A comprehensive and robust security strategy must be put in place to prevent such tragic events from recurring.

"We call on law enforcement agencies to intensify efforts in investigating these attacks, bringing the perpetrators to justice, and

preventing any future acts of violence.

"We advocate enduring peace, dialogue and understanding among all residents of our great state. Let us remember that unity is our strength, and by working together, we can overcome the challenges that threaten our peace and stability."

force monitoring Lagos Badagry expressway arrested Immigration officers along the corridor.

He said: "Sincerely, our officers are on their duty points in Agbara, Gbaji and Seme and the patrol teams are doing their work without any molestation or harassment throughout August 9. There was nothing like confrontation or arrest from any quarter or Police task force. There was no case of arrest of any officer from the two commands."

Residents insist arrests were made

Meanwhile, residents around the scene of the incident told Vanguard that some of the operatives of the security agencies that were apprehended were at the check point

illegally.

One of the residents, who spoke to Vanguard on condition of anonymity said if they were there legally, officers that took to their heels would not have done that.

Reacting to the development, an officer of the Nigeria Customs Service, attached to Seme Border Command, said the complaints by stakeholders on that axis led to the creation of the Joint Border Patrol.

The officer, who spoke, said: "The move against illegal checkpoint arose from the Joint Border Security meeting that we had and the Comptroller of the Seme Border Command is the first person that took the step of collapsing some of the Customs check points despite the fact that Customs has the right to be at the border.

