

Niger: Bandits kill four in midnight raid

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From John Adams, *Minna*

With barely one week after gunmen massacred 42 people in Kasuwan Deji in Borgu Local Government Area of Niger State, another group of gunmen suspected to be bandits have invaded the Damala community, in the same Borgu Local Government Area, and killed four people.

The latest incident occurred on Friday night at about 11 p.m. when the Kambari-populated community was asleep.

According to a community source who spoke to our correspondent on the phone, Damala community is located a few kilometres from Woko (Wawa), a mining site being operated by a yet-to-be-identified individual in Borgu Local Government Area of the state.

Our source disclosed that a preliminary finding indicates that the attackers, armed with sophisticated weapons and operating under the cover of darkness, invaded the village and targeted the victims before rustling their cattle.

The victims were said to be controlling herds of cattle in the area and were the main targets of the bandits, who, after killing their victims, went away with hundreds of cattle.

“The bandits were in their numbers when they came. They went straight to their victims and killed them in their houses. They came purposely because of them; they were the target.

“All the cattle that were stolen were moved towards the Kainji Lake National Park forest in Borgu Sector that night.”

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It was further gathered that the bandits retreated towards the direction of Kainji Lake National Park, an area known for difficult terrain and limited accessibility.

This incident underscores the continued security challenges around mining corridors and rural settlements within Borgu Local Government Area.

Communities close to forested and national park regions have remained under siege from bandits and other terrorists who often exploit the inactivity in the park.

The Chairman of Borgu Local Government Area, Mallam Abdullahi Mohammed Nasiru, who confirmed the incident, said his council is under siege from terrorists and called for help.

While calling for intensification of security patrols around communities being attacked, the chairman pointed out that there is an urgent need to secure the national park, which has become an abode for criminals.

He suggested enhanced collaboration between security agencies, park rangers, and local vigilante groups in order to strengthen security in the area, stressing that people have continued to live under apprehension and fear.

