



Gunmen kill 15, burn bodies in northern Nigeria



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Gunmen have killed 15 village traders returning from a market at night and set their bodies on fire in northern Nigeria's Zamfara state, a local police chief said on Friday.

"Gunmen, suspected to be armed robbers, attacked some local traders on their way back to a market in neighbouring Katsina state late Thursday," Zamfara state police commissioner Yabo told AFP.

"The armed robbers waylaid the traders travelling back in an open truck and opened fire. They then loaded the truck with 14 bodies and burnt them," said Yabo, adding that a 15th trader died in hospital.

Villagers said around 100 robbers came out of the bush and forced the truck to stop. The attack occurred near a village that is close to the town of Birnin Magaji in Zamfara state, which is in northern Niger.

Armed robberies have been on the rise in Zamfara in recent months.

In October, marauding bandits combed a village in Lingyado and killed 19 people in response to an attack on a gang of robbers by local vigilantes, residents said.

In December, four policemen and two children from one family were killed by armed men in the Dansadau village.

Zamfara is around 350 kilometres west of Kano city, where Islamist sect Boko Haram killed 15 people in a wave of gun and bomb attacks a week ago.