

District head, sister burnt to death in Nasarawa

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

Zhe Meri, a traditional ruler in Nasarawa State, was burnt in a house in Agyaragu in Jenkwe Development Area where he had been taking refuge for months after he ran from his native Gidan Rai

in the neighbouring Doma local government area of the state.

He ran from Gidan Rai, a place that was hit by Fulani nomads and peasants' crisis some months ago, to Agyaragu, but the district head and his elder sister were roasted to

death in a house where they had been taking refuge.

His keepers, it was gathered, ran and escaped from the attack of Wednesday by armed men said to be Ombatse, a spiritual group from Eggon, whose members stormed Agyaragu and

targeted residents of Koro people for killing and burning.

The deceased traditional ruler was trapped in the house, displaced persons who returned to the town to speak to a team of government officials led

by the deputy governor, Dameshi Barua Luka, said.

Administrator of Jenkwe Development Area Wuduyamba Agidi, who led the deputy governor round the now deserted town, said reports from various families showed that nine persons including

the traditional ruler as well as children were killed.

The deputy governor, who described the attack as "barbaric", said "one cannot really ascertain the real cause of the crisis for now but I can assure you that we would get to the root of the matter."



Gunmen slaughter three children in Maiduguri

From Hamza Idris & Yahaya Ibrahim, Maiduguri

Three children, aged between 8 and 12 years were slaughtered in the early hours of yesterday while five other people were also shot dead in a separate incidence in Maiduguri. This is the first time children were directly attacked and killed in a cruel manner since the beginning of the ongoing insurgency in the state.

Unconfirmed sources said the three kids were children of a plain cloth security operative in Maiduguri, saying they were slaughtered in front of their mother.

Residents said the father of the children identified as Adiju Zubairu was away for work when the assailants struck his house at Silimanti, a quite settlement along Polo area of the metropolis around 2am.

When contacted on phone, spokesman of the Joint Task Force (JTF), Lieutenant Colonel Sagir Musa said he was out of town on official engagement while the phone of the police spokesman, Gideon Jibrin, could not be reached.

In another night attack, another group of gunmen also stormed different compounds in Lawan Bukar ward and shot dead five persons, witnesses said.

Part of the razed palace of Zhe Migli in Agyaragu.

PHOTO: JOSEPH HIR

Four killed in Kano 'blasphemy' riot

From Lawan Danjuma Adamu, Kano

At least four people were feared killed in a religious riot that broke out in Bichi town of Kano State, after a non-Muslim was accused of blaspheming against Prophet Muhammad in the town located about 30 kilometres from Kano.

Several other people were reported injured, while a church and shops were set ablaze by rampaging youths who staged a violent protest over the alleged blasphemy.

The crisis erupted around 9am after a non-Muslim tailor 'wrongly' pronounced the Hausa name for a popular outfit (Na Annabi ya zo kasuwa), which some youths misrepresented as casting deliberate aspersion on the Prophet of Islam.

Residents said he was macheted to death instantly.

Hundreds of youths first took the streets burning tyres, before directing their anger on people's property. The rioters reportedly burnt down dozens of shops and vandalized vehicles. Schools were hurriedly closed with

students asked to go home, our correspondent learnt.

In some areas, the rioters entered homes and brought out people's property before setting them on fire.

An eyewitness said he saw the body of a boy who was killed and dumped in drainage along FCE Bichi Road in the area, saying the victim was the son of his neighbour.

Daily Trust also gathered that another person was killed on a road leading to Gwarzo Local Government, while hospital sources in the town told our

correspondent that two burnt bodies were brought to the Bichi General Hospital.

State Commissioner of Police Ibrahim K. Idris confirmed the incident, saying one person has been killed, ten people arrested and three places of worship burnt. He said the riot was staged by miscreants.

The commissioner said the crisis was "as a result of "misinformation", saying local Imams have been mobilized to enlighten the people and we were able to evacuate the innocent tailor.

Yobe to spend N1.7bn on health, others

From Kabiru Hamisu Matazu, Damaturu

Yobe State government is to spend over N1.7 billion to improve health services, water supply, and local transportation among other measures taken to improve the living conditions of people of the state.

State Commissioner for Integrated Rural Development Alhaji Muhammad Dakasko told newsmen at the end of the bi-weekly state executive council in Damaturu yesterday that 50 units of 16-seat buses will be procured at N425 million and will

be sold on loan basis to beneficiaries in Yobe's 17 local government areas.

The commissioner said 1,000 hospital beds and mattresses will be procured at the cost of N117 million for the new 200-bed capacity hospital built by the Yobe State government in Damaturu.

Teachers honour Ajimobi, Kwankwaso

From Yemi Bamidele, Ibadan

Oyo State governor Isiaq Abiola Ajimobi and his Kano counterpart Dr Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso were yesterday honoured with Best Governors 2012 award by the Association of Primary School Head Teachers of Nigeria (APSHN) in Ibadan for their contribution to the development of primary education in their respective states.

Giving reasons for the choice of the two governors, national president of the association Comrade Mahmud Lawal said it awarded them the honour as recognition for their "identifying

with the course of head teachers" in Nigeria.

Also speaking, Oyo State chairman of the body Alhaji Bolaji Adeleke thanked Oyo government for the positive differences it had been making in the cause of education in the state and urged all governments in the country to make enough arrangements the development of education and training of the Nigerian child.

In his acceptance speech, Governor Ajimobi thanked the teachers for recognizing his administration's "modest" efforts in uplifting education in the last 17 months of being in government.