

DOZENS FEARED DEAD AS TROOPS RAID KADUNA VILLAGE



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Troops in search of thieves have allegedly opened fire at Kwalakwangi village in Birnin Gwari local government area of Kaduna state, killing dozens.

Armed robbers and rustlers believed to be hiding in the village and adjoining communities have been attacking travellers and herders.

Our reporters, who went to the area, gathered that hundreds of soldiers were drafted to the location, following incessant reports of robberies and rustling. Troops cordoned-off the town after the operation and prevented relatives and journalists from obtaining situation report. Over 40 people were said to have been killed in the village alone.

A resident of Birnin Gwari, Shehu Hassan told Sunday Trust that many soldiers took part in the operation which led to loss of many lives. "When the soldiers got there the hoodlums initially engaged then in a gun battle but they were later overpowered and retreated. The thieves who were on motorcycles were pursued by the soldiers. The soldiers later saw them in the village fueling their motorcycles and started shooting everyone around."

Idris Musa Alhassan, Chairman Birnin Gwari Local Government Area, who confirmed the incident told Sunday Trust that some people were killed in the incidents and many people have deserted the village.

"I am appealing to everyone to be calm and law abiding and to refrain from speculations. No one can ascertain the number of casualties or if there are innocent people among the dead. Even though some of the villagers have confirmed that some of the people killed are not thieves, no one can say for sure except the military who are in the position to explain that. Many of those affected by the incident have been receiving relief materials," he said.

Meanwhile, most Kwalakwangi residents, including the village head have left the area and are taking refuge in other neighboring villages.

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