

THE WORLD NEWS II

Bandits expel residents from Zamfara villages, kill 36

Category: News | Published on Friday, 12 September 2014 05:00 | Written by Shehu Umar, Gusau | Hits: 227

Armed bandits are reported to have killed 36 people and forced residents out of 10 villages in Mada and Wonaka districts of Gusau LGA of Zamfara State.

This is the latest in the series of raids on the farming and herding communities by bandits and cattle rustlers believed to be hiding in forests near the borders with Kaduna and Katsina states.

In April, more than 150 people were killed in Yar' galadima village of Maru LGA when gunmen attacked vigilante members meeting on how to deal with the persistent attacks on the communities.

According to a resident, Mallam Tasi'u Kanawa, residents of Fegin Kanawa, Fegin Mahe, Wonaka, Tambalawa, Majiro, Kofa, Fura Girke, Kundamau, Koshiya, Ingwai and many other villages have abandoned their homes.

He said 19 people were killed in Fura Girke, 2 in Ingwai, 3 in Lafiya and 12 in Bawo communities. He said more than 4,000 residents of his village have fled, adding that apart from robbing them, the bandits are also raping their wives. They raped about 10 women and one died in Kukar Gandu village, he said.

"I have two wives and four children and I'm here with them taking shelter in this primary school without food because we abandoned all our belongings at home and in this camp alone we are about 1,000, that is why we are appealing to the state government to come to our rescue because the attackers are bent on eliminating us all," he added.

Another resident, Zainab Lawali, said at the primary school in Damba that many women were raped by the bandits and some were taken to hospital while some have died. She alleged insider conspiracy, saying some residents supply the bandits information on young and beautiful women in the communities.

The residents are now taking refuge in Mada, Kwatarkwashi, Gusau and neighbouring states. The attackers are suspected to be cattle rustlers hiding in the Dajin Gwamna forest along the Katsina -Zamfara border.

The Special Adviser to the Governor on Media and Communication, Alhaji Sani Abdullahi Tsafe, said the residents had fled the communities and are taking refuge in Gusau and Tsafe LGAs while Wonaka and Mada districts of Gusau LGA are badly affected.

"It's unfortunate, the bandits are still attacking our villages, killing residents and dispossessing them of their belongings but the state government is doing its best to restore law and order. Governor Abdulaziz Yari has set up a committee to find ways of assisting the victims. The displaced residents will be provided food and medicine," he added.

When contacted, spokesman for the state Police command, DSP Lawal Abdullahi, dismissed the reported attacks as mere rumour. He said the area is calm and security had been beefed up through increasing the number security agents, including the police and the military.

"People are peddling rumours about impending bandits attacks, that is why they deserted their communities and some of them have started returning to their homes," he added.