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Attack on Maiduguri villages...85 corpses recovered

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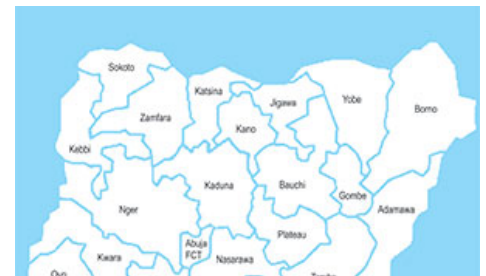
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Clockwise: A child after the attack | One of the vehicles burnt | Women mourn after the attack on Dailori, near Maiduguri. | Ground zero... over 300 houses burnt by the insurgents

At least 85 people were killed Saturday night when Boko Haram militants attacked three villages on the outskirts of Maiduguri, Borno state.

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The victims include women and children while over 100 people were also injured in the attack.

The three villages - Dalori, Walori and Kofa lie between five to 10 kilometres outside Maiduguri.

The attack began at about 7 p.m. on Saturday and lasted for nearly four hours.

The state Commissioner for Health Dr Haruna Mshelia said a total of 85 corpses were yesterday recovered by security agencies and volunteers from the three villages.

He revealed this to the state Deputy Governor Alhaji Usman Mamman Durkwa when he visited the Specialists Hospital in Maiduguri.

The commissioner said 65 corpses were deposited at the Specialists Hospital, 10 at the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital while ten other corpses burnt beyond recognition were buried in the affected villages.

Several Boko Haram insurgents in military uniform drove to the villages along Maiduguri to Bama road not far from the University of Maiduguri in over ten vehicles in the evening.

They attacked the residents, burning over 300 houses and abducting several people before fleeing the area.

Survivors told Daily Trust in Dalori that the first group of insurgents came in plain clothes and went from house-to-house seizing livestock and food items before setting over 300 houses ablaze.

The Vice Chairman of the Civilian JTF in the area, Baba Kaka told Daily Trust that he was in the village when the insurgents attacked.

"As those in plain clothes were attacking the village, others in military uniform arrived at the edge of the village pretending to be soldiers that were there to rescue civilians.

"That was how they deceived most of the people and killed them. They also abducted some of the unsuspecting civilians.

"There is no single house in this village whose family member had joined Civilian JTF that was not searched and someone killed.


"We tried to challenge them but they had sophisticated weapons when we had only dane guns. Here in Dalori alone, over 100 people were killed," he said.

Baba Kaka pointed to an area where 25 burnt corpses littered the ground, saying: "All these people were assembled by the insurgents before they fire-bombed them.


"To make matters worse, soldiers were firing heavy armour from the town which confused our people and most of them ran towards the insurgents and were captured."

He said many people had relocated to Dalori from the surrounding



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villages which swelled up the population of the town.

“Assuming there is the presence of soldiers here, the damage would not have been much,” he added.

An elderly resident, Modu Bukar, who survived the attack, sat under a tree looking terrified.

“Seven members of my family have been killed; four of my children have gone missing and my house has been burnt down,” he said.

At Walori village, a 63-year-old hunter, Adamu Baba Alhaji said the insurgents who attacked the village had problem with most of the guns. “I saw some of them trying to repair their guns that had malfunction. That was when I managed to escape.

“When some of the fleeing villagers were running away, the insurgents in military uniform posing as rescuers, gathered some villagers and detonated a bomb that killed 19 villagers. They also burnt several houses in the village,” he said.

At Kofa village, suicide bombers in military uniform were said to have assembled so many fleeing villagers close to a steak stand before detonating a bomb that killed many people.

The Executive Chairman of the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), Engineer Satomi Alhaji Ahmed, who described the incident as tragic, told newsmen at Dalori that the casualty figure there was higher because it is more populated than the two other villages attacked by the insurgents.

He assured displaced residents that the state government would come to their aid.

The information coordinator of Operation Lafiya Dole, Col Mustapha Anka, in a statement, said it was a reprisal attack on the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) and innocent citizens in the area.

The statement reads: “In their desperate efforts for reprisal attacks on strong, determined and committed members of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) and innocent citizen, yesterday 30 January 2016 BHT insurgent launched attack Dalori through Yale from (rear of Dalori village).

“An eye witnessed said that the insurgent came in two Golf cars and motorcycles and started opening fire and burning houses. Their motive was to cause rancour and penetrate crowd with suicide bombers.

“Similarly, while people were running for their dear lives to Gomari Kerkeri village three female suicide bombers attempted to make their way into the crowd but were intercepted and subsequently got blown up. During the incident lives were lost while some people sustained injuries. The insurgents also attempted to penetrate Dalori IDP camp, but the attempt was resisted by the troop which resulted into detonation of IED by the suicide bombers.”

He further stated that the Theater Commander of Operation Lafiya Dole, Major General Hassan Umaru assured the people of the readiness of the military to bring the insurgency to an end. He commended the villagers for their resilience and urged them to be strong and committed in the fight against insurgency.

BBC Hausa Service also yesterday reported that the insurgents stormed Dalori village at dusk, when people were preparing for the evening prayer.

The resident, who spoke from his hideout in the bush, said his two brothers as well as their religious cleric were among the victims of the attacks.

"Boko Haram stormed Dalori town around 6:10pm. We have left the town already. They burnt the entire town. As I speak with you, we left our houses on fire," he said in a live report.

On the number of victims, he said, "I can't estimate the number of people killed at this time. But they killed both my junior and senior brothers. They also killed our cleric.

"They (insurgents) are still in the town. They are many and they came on 15 motorcycles, with automatic rifles. They killed many people and they opened fire on anything," he said.


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