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Fresh attacks leave 21 dead in Southern Kaduna

By Andrew Agbese, Kaduna | Publish Date: Feb 21 2017 2:00AM

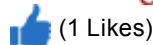
Twenty-one people have been killed and several houses burnt in a fresh round of attacks on five southern Kaduna communities.

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Fresh attacks leave 21 dead in
Southern Kaduna

Twenty-one people have been killed and several houses burnt in a fresh round of attacks on five southern Kaduna communities.

The first round of attacks was launched about 5:30 pm on Sunday in a community on Jema'a local government area of the state while fresh attacks on four communities in Kaura local government area were launched around 6:00 am yesterday.

The communities attacked were Ashim, Nissi and Zilan in Atakad District in Kaura local government area and **Bakin Kogi in Goska District in Jema'a local government area.**

The attacks in Ashim, Nisi and Zilan which reportedly claimed 15 lives and over 50 houses occurred about 6:00 am yesterday while the attack in Bakin Kogi which claimed seven lives happened on Sunday about 5:30 pm.

Narrating the incident, President Takad Community Development Association, Mr. Enock Andong told newsmen on phone that the attackers were heavily armed. "They came around 6:00 am today (Monday) and they killed 15 people in Ashim and Zilan alone. I am on my way to Nisi to find out the situation of things there," he said.

Andong said the soldiers however killed one of the assailants.

Another witness, Enoch Barau said the attackers who were clad in black outfits started shooting sporadically as they approached the village in an attack he said lasted about four hours.

"Yesterday (Sunday) around 5pm, we heard gunshots within our surrounding. When I heard the gunshots three times, I came out of my house. The shots continued rapidly, before I could realize what was happening, they had surrounded part of the community. I saw many people coming down from the hillside shooting and running. They were in a complete black and black from head to toe.

"As they were shooting, we managed to evacuate women to a safe zone while the men stayed for defence. As they were shooting, they were burning our houses. Over 100 houses were set ablaze. Seven people were killed and one person is still missing," he said.

He said the soldiers guarding the area were taken unawares as they went to have their bath when the attack occurred.

The Kaduna State Government yesterday confirmed the attack.

A statement by the media aide to the governor, Samuel Aruwan said the situation had been brought under control by yesterday afternoon, but security operations continued.



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He said, "Unknown gunmen in a coordinated attack invaded Bakin Kogi, Kaninkon Village in Jemaa Local Government Area in the state on Sunday 19th February, 2017 at about 5:30pm. They were repulsed by Operation Yaki Surveillance Patrol Teams and Operation Harmony Patrol Teams. Further attacks were recorded today in Kaura local government area. Fatalities were recorded and some houses were burnt in the attacks."

The state government has as a result announced the relocation of the Garrison Commander of the 1 Division of the Nigerian Army Ismaila Isa and the state Commissioner of Police, CP Agyole Abbeh to the southern part of the state.

He said this is to enable the GOC and CO coordinate a determined response to renewed attacks by armed bandits on communities in Kaura and Jema'a local government areas.

The statement said Governor Nasir El-Rufai had extended his condolence to the families of the victims of the renewed attacks, assuring them that the government was fully committed to securing the area with the active support of the army and the police.

The statement added that the two battalions of the army and the 10 mobile police squadrons were engaging the bandits.

The governor said that despite the difficulties and the pain of the attacks, this is not the time to give the bandits the pleasure of seeing victims turn on each other.

"I have been in touch with the security agencies and I have been studiously following the situation in Jema'a and Kaura local government areas over the unfortunate attacks. This is clearly a wicked, evil and devilish act being perpetrated by enemies of peace and humanity," the governor stated.

The police public relations officer, ASP Aliyu Usman did not pick his calls when our correspondent called to further confirm the incident.

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