

Fresh Attack Claims 38 In Nasarawa Communities

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Bandit Rampage

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No fewer than 38 persons, including children and women, have been reportedly killed by yet-to-be-identified gunmen in Takalafiya, Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

A local who recalled the horrors of the attack said trouble began two weeks ago when a farmer in Gwanja, a community close to Takalafiya, challenged a herder who allowed his cattle to eat the newly planted crops.

“As the farmer was talking to the herder to send his herds out of his farm, a fierce disagreement ensued.

“We heard that the herder brought out a cutlass but the farmer snatched the cutlass and fought him back and unfortunately the herder died instantly,” the local said.

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Our correspondent learnt that the authority of Karu Local Government Area intervened and the matter was settled.

But on Thursday, gunmen launched an attack on Gwanja and killed four persons.

“When the gunmen discovered that some residents of Gwanja community fled to Takalafiya, they launched an attack on the community on Friday and killed people.

“In the early hours of Friday, at exactly 4am the people of the the community were panicking when they discovered a very strange dog roaming the streets of Takalafiya, with huge charms around its neck, they mobilised and killed the dog.

“After they succeeded in killing the dog, as they clustered around it wondering where it came from, the herdsmen started shooting guns sporadically into the air around the community and that was how many residents were killed,” another local told our correspondent.

Our correspondent gathered that on Friday seven bodies brought in from Takalafiya and other communities were deposited at the mortuary of the Federal Medical Centre (FMC), Keffi, with many locals still missing.

Our correspondent reports that on Saturday a mass burial was held for 38 persons, including women and children, killed by the gunmen in the two communities.

The Deputy Governor of Nasarawa State, Dr Emmanuel Akabe, who led a government delegation to the mass burial, condemned the wanton killings and destruction of property.

Akabe who expressed dismay over the killings, vowed that government would unravel the perpetrators and prosecute them to serve as a deterrent.

He assured that the state government would provide relief materials to those displaced, and urged the affected communities to give credible information to the relevant authorities.

Our correspondent further reports that the neighbouring communities, including Gwanja, Angwan Bege, Angwan Madaki and Gidan Allah, occupied predominantly by Gwandara, Mada and Yeskwa tribes, were also attacked by the gunmen.

In the same vein, the Chairman of Karu LGA, Mr James Thomas, who visited the attacked communities before the mass burial, condemned the attack.

Thomas, represented by his deputy, Mr Lawal Yakubu Karshi, appealed for calm and also vowed that the council would ensure that the perpetrators are arrested.

Meanwhile, the Nasarawa State Police Command said it has recovered no fewer than 14 bodies.

The PPRO, DSP Rahman Nansel, disclosed this in a statement obtained by *Daily Trust* in Lafia.

The statement explained that on May 11 at about 10pm, information was received that an 18-year-old Fulani man, Jibo Alhaji-Ali was attacked by unidentified persons while on his way to Kwaja village, Gitata.

The statement said upon receipt of the information, police operatives attached to Gitata Division went to the scene and took the victim with a machete cut on his head to Na-Allah private hospital, Gitata where he died while receiving treatment.

The statement further revealed that information was also received that Takalafiya and Kwaja villages were attacked by gunmen.

“The Commissioner of Police, Mr Maiyaki Baba, deployed police operatives comprising of mobile police personnel, counter-terrorism unit, and the military to the area where 14 corpses were recovered and taken to the hospital and subsequently buried.

“The commissioner of police hereby condoled with all those who lost their loved ones and ordered discreet investigation to unravel the faces behind the attack, assuring that anyone found culpable will be dealt with according to the provisions of the law,” the statement concluded.