

Borno Death Toll Hits 62, More Residents Flee

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THE District Head of Konduga, Zannah Masu Yale and authorities of University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital (UMTH) in Borno State Friday said that the death toll in last Tuesday's attacks by suspected Boko

Haram gunmen had risen from 53 to 62, following the deaths of the injured and retrieval of more bodies in the bush on Thursday morning.

Over 2, 500 fleeing Konduga residents have also yesterday been resettled by National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) at two resettlement centres, with the distribution of more relief material and food items.

Updating the death toll yesterday in Maiduguri, Masu told The Guardian that the Konduga Volunteer Group members retrieved five more bodies in the bush Thursday and buried them at the cemetery, according to Islamic rites in the evening. "After a two-hour search for more bodies in the bush yesterday, members of the volunteer group retrieved five bodies; and were buried at the cemetery. This represents a total of 62 people killed, including the four injured people that died at the UMTH yesterday in Maiduguri," said the District Head.

On the fleeing residents, he said: "Most of my people had already fled when the attackers came calling, though a few of us, the agile men hid in nearby farmlands. The attackers surrounded Malari village and

started shooting in the air but changed their mind when they realised that nobody was in the village. Luckily enough, they did not burn any property."

He also said that following intelligence report, the villagers deserted their homes that led to the fleeing of many villagers from their houses.

"When we heard of the attack, we informed relevant authorities and security measures were taken. Most of the people have returned to their homes in Malari village, located 10 kilometres west of destroyed Konduga town," he said.

The Guardian also learnt that after the fleeing of over 2, 500 residents, the insurgents, however, advanced towards the destroyed Konduga Township and hanged around the open stadium for half an hour, before they were pursued by military troops towards Sambisa Forest.

Confirming the incident yesterday in Maiduguri, spokesman of Nigerian Air Force (NAF), Squadron Leader Chris Erundu, said the ground and

aerial operations is still ongoing to ascertain if there are any casualties.

On casualties sustained in Konduga and Malari attacks, Erundu in a texted message said: "No details yet."

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