

68 Civilians, Soldiers Killed In Borno, Katsina Attacks

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No fewer than 68 persons including soldiers were reportedly killed by Boko Haram terrorists in Bama local government area of Borno State on Friday night, seven people were killed within the same period when armed bandits attacked Magajin Wando village in Dandume local government area of Katsina State.

Our correspondent gathered that the Borno attack was highly coordinated and began around 9:00 pm at Darul Jamal till daybreak.

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The village was recently resettled this year in Bama local government area of the state. According to residents, the terrorists invaded and killed many locals and travellers overnight in Darul Jamal, close Banki town.

Locals said several residents were killed from among the relocated IDPs who were hosted at the Government Science Secondary School IDP camp.

The source said, "At least 56 civilians and five soldiers were killed. Although the casualty figure is not ascertained but more than 50 people were killed in last night's attacks."

Another source said many people were still missing.

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"Over 20 houses and 10 buses were also burnt," our source added.

Neither the Nigerian military nor the police reacted or issued any statement over the incident at press time yesterday.

Governor Babagana Zulum went to Bama yesterday to get first-hand information on the incident and commiserate with the victims.

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Bama was one of the local government areas of Borno State overtaken by Boko Haram terrorists in 2004 where they made a caliphate before the Nigerian military routed them and liberated the town. Similarly, in Katsina State, seven people were reported killed late Friday when bandits attacked Magajin Wando village in Dandume local government area.

The attack which occurred between 11:00 p.m. and midnight, threw the community into panic as the criminals opened fire indiscriminately.

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This is contained in a statement by the state commissioner, Ministry of Internal Security and Home Affairs, Dr Nasiru Mua'zu, who said the situation could have been far worse but for the swift intervention of the Katsina State Community Watch Corps who repelled them.

He added that the bandits later ambushed an evacuation team conveying injured victims to hospital, where the Community Watch Corps vehicle came under heavy gunfire and was set ablaze. Despite this, the corps members fought their way out and managed to bring the injured to safety.

Preliminary investigations suggest that the ambush was carried out as a reprisal after the same bandit group lost several members during the initial confrontation with security volunteers.

The commissioner commended the bravery of the Community Watch Corps and assured residents of the government's determination to intensify security operations.

"We extend our deepest condolences to the families of those who lost their lives and pray for the quick recovery of the injured," he stated.

Stressing that the state would continue to collaborate with the military, police and other agencies to dismantle criminal networks, he urged residents to remain vigilant and share intelligence with security agencies to support ongoing operations.