

Gunmen in army uniform execute five in Taraba

• Police investigating possible military involvement

GUNMEN in military uniform abducted five people in Taraba State, tied their hands and shot them dead, police said yesterday.

The attack overnight took place in Dananaca Village, which is usually peaceful but which suffered a bombing at the hands of militants last week.

"The police are still investigating to ascertain if the people are real soldiers and from which unit," police spokesman for Taraba State, Ibiam Mbaseki said on telephone.

"If they were genuine military men, they would have contacted us before carrying out such an operation, but we don't know where they came from."

Islamic sect Boko Haram, blamed for dozens of shootings and bombings since it launched an uprising in 2009, has sought to extend its reach to much of the North and Abuja. The group has become President Goodluck Jonathan's number one secu-

rity headache.

According to Reuters, the sect's armed struggle intensified after its spiritual leader Mohammed Yusuf died in police custody in 2009.

A bomb blast struck a police chief's convoy in Jalingo, the Taraba State capital last Monday, killing 11 people in the first such insurgent attack in the state.

A flurry of arrests of top figures in recent months had raised hopes the Boko Haram insurgency could be on the wane, but attacks in the past two weeks suggest they are very much still at large. Insecurity has spread across the north.

Suspected Boko Haram militants stormed a prison at Kumshe in Bama Local Government Area of Borno State on Friday, killing two guards and freeing the inmates, police said.

Gunmen threw bombs and opened fire on a cattle market in Potiskum, Yobe State on Wednesday, killing at least 60 people.