

Unknown gunmen kill 100 in four villages

The orgy of bloodletting in some parts of the country has continued, with no fewer than 100 killed in four Katsina State villages.

Officials and witnesses said yesterday that the attackers on Wednesday rode motorcycles into villages in broad daylight and killed residents.

President Goodluck Jonathan last night ordered the military to dislodge the terrorists whose identities remained unclear.

Witnesses said some of the assailants were ethnic Fulani. It was unclear whether they were Boko Harm insurgents.

Some people described the assailants as cattle rustlers.

House of Representatives member Abdullahi Abbas Machika said 47 people were buried in one village alone, following the attack. "So far, 69 bodies have been recovered from the attacks carried out by a large group of gunmen riding on motorcycles," he added.

A witness who narrowly escaped and later returned to his village told Premium Times yesterday that he attended the burial of 27 people in his hometown, Maigora. He said he later attended the burial of another 21 people at Sabon Layin Galadima; 40 people were killed at Marabar Maigora; seven in Kurar Mota and eight in Unguwar Doka.

Local residents told the BBC Hausa Service that security personnel had not been deployed in the area as at yesterday.

The villages attacked are Mararabar Gora, Maigora town, Sabo Layin Galadima and Unguwan Doka in Faskari local government area.

The gunmen moved from house-to-house, killing and maiming people, including children and women. They set houses on fire.

It was learnt that the attack, which was started on Tuesday night, was extended till Thursday.

"We are just coming from the funeral of innocent victims at Maiangua town; we attended similar funerals at Unguwar Doka some hours ago," an eyewitness said.

Police spokesman Aminu Abubakar declined to speak on the attack yesterday.

Machika told the BBC that security personnel were busy protecting President Jonathan, who was on a two-day visit to the state while people were being killed in his constituency.

President Jonathan last night ordered the military to comb the Rugu Forest and dislodge the terrorists.

Speaking at a dinner organised in his honour by the Katsina State government at the Government House Banquet Hall, Jonathan said the Rugu forest is a border area linking four states of Katsina, Zamfara, Niger,

and Kaduna and the neighbouring Niger Republic.

He regretted that the forest meant for economic purposes had turned to hideout for insurgents from where they launch attacks on the states.

The President also directed the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to deliver relief materials to the affected communities.