



•L-R: Borno State Governor, Professor Babagana Umara Zulum; Senator Abubakar Kyari and others during the Governor's visit to Damasak yesterday

18 confirmed killed in Boko Haram Damasak attack

ABOUT 60,000 residents of Damasak in Mobbar Local Government

Area of Borno State have been displaced in the aftermath of Wednesday's attack on the town by terrorists, the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) said yesterday.

At least 18 persons, including a senior commander of the Islamic State of the West Africa Province (ISWAP) Bukar Gana Fitchmeram a.k.a. Abu Aisha were killed during the attack while 21 people were injured.

The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) said as many as 65,000 people had fled the town following a series of terror attacks.

Most of them fled towards the state capital Maiduguri and other nearby towns.

Fighters from ISWAP stormed the town three times in a week to strike a military garrison, burning homes and a UN office and killing people.

In the latest violence, the terrorists attacked an army garrison before being forced back into the town itself,

•ISWAP commander Abu Aisha injured
•60,000 flee as clashes continue – UN agencies

military sources and residents said.

"Following the latest attack on Wednesday 14 April, the third in seven days, up to 80 per cent of the town's population — which includes the local community and internally displaced people — were forced to flee," UNHCR spokesman Babar Baloch said.

He added: "Due to insecurity, however, humanitarian access is increasingly challenging in many parts of Nigeria's Borno State, including for UNHCR staff, who were forced to temporarily relocate out of Damasak in the past seven days."

"Assailants looted and burned down private homes, warehouses of humanitarian agencies, a police station, a clinic, and also a UNHCR facility."

"The situation on the ground is extremely critical," he said. "If this continues, it will be impossible — maybe for longer periods of time — for us to de-

liver aid to people who desperately need it."

There are "very worrying" reports of clashes between insurgent groups and Nigeria's armed forces, spokesman Jens Laerke of the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, (OCHA) said.

Armed groups have been attacking humanitarian facilities and at times conducting house-to-house searches, reportedly looking for civilian aid workers, he said.

Most humanitarian aid operations have been suspended in the area since Sunday because of the insecurity, Laerke said.

At least four people, including a soldier, were killed in an attack on Monday. The UN said eight others were killed Wednesday, while locals said 10 bodies were buried and 20 people were injured.

ISWAP, which split from the jihadist group Boko Haram in 2016, has been attacking sol-

diers and bases while killing and kidnapping civilians.

Gov Zulum spends night in Damasak, confirms 18 deaths

Governor Babagana Zulum drove into the town on Thursday and spent the night there in a bid to boost the confidence of the residents and the troops.

He said reports available to him showed that 18 people had died while 21 others were injured.

The terrorists also destroyed the UN humanitarian hub, a police station, residential houses and a medical centre.

The governor, with who were Senator Abubakar Kyari (Borno North), Representative Bukar Gana Kareto (Mobbar/Guzamala/Abadam) and other officials, said robust measures were being put in place to avert future attacks on the community by terrorists.

He also met with security agents and presented to the military 12 security vehicles which include an armoured personnel carrier (APC) and 11 patrol vehicles, to aid their fight against the insurgents.