

Father, son, 15 others feared killed in fresh Niger attacks

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TRAGEDY struck at the weekend in Niger State, as no fewer than 15 persons, including a father and his son, were killed when gunmen suspected to be bandits laid siege to some villages in Mashegu, Lavun and Wushishi local government areas of the state.

Several others were said to have fled their homes following the attacks, which allegedly occurred from 12:00 pm to around 8:00pm on Saturday.

In a related development, hoodlums also attacked some villages in Mashegu Local Government Area of

the state, namely Sahon-Rami, Igbede, Chekaku, Ubegi, Maishankafi and Poshi.

Reacting to the incident, the press secretary to the chairman of Mashegu Local Government, Mohammed A. Isah, informed our correspondent that the Chief of Staff to the chairman of the council, Umar Ubegi, and his father were reportedly killed during the attack.

Nigerian Tribune also learnt that seven other people, including the village head of Poshi, were murdered in Sahon-Rami and Maishankafi.

A source hinted that "the bandits moved from one village to the other on motor-

cycles, killing and abducting several persons.

"They also rustled yet unascertained number of livestock belonging to villagers.

"About 13 communities were sacked and many people have fled for dear lives for fear of being killed by the mauraders who were wielding sophisticated weapons.

"The atmosphere in our local government is tense now as a result of the violent attacks on the hapless people, especially residents in the council areas.

The hoodlums, who have no respect for the sanctity of human lives, had been carrying out their dastardly acts since last Friday.

"Though only one village was attacked last Friday, which was Sahon-Rami, the remaining villages were attacked the following day, Saturday."

In another development, in Lavun Local Government Area, about 10 communities were said to have been attacked, leaving about three persons dead, while three others were abducted. The villages attacked included Egbako, Dabban, Kupa, Ndaruka, Tsogi, Mawogi, Yemi, Managi, Kanko and Gogaga respectively.

A resident of Egbako, one of the communities attacked by the armed bandits, Mr Yakubu Mohammed, stated that "they started the oper-

ation around 12:00pm, moving from one community to another.

"For now, we have only discovered the dead bodies of three persons. They also went away with three others alive."

Mohammed noted that the affected communities were 36 kilometers away from Bida, and less than 30 kilometers from the Wadata palace of Etsu Nupe, Alhaji Yahaya Abubakar, in Bida township of the state.

Meanwhile, the Niger State Police command has confirmed the killing of three people by gunmen in Ebbo and Ndagbegi villages of Lavun Local Government area of the state.

The state Commissioner of Police, Mr. Monday Kuryas, confirmed this in an interview with News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Minna on Sunday.

Kuryas said that the incident occurred on Sunday at about 5am when the gunmen attacked the village.

According to him, a detachment of police tactical squad and the military have been deployed to the area and have launched a manhunt with a view to tracking down the criminals.

"We appeal to residents to assist security personnel deployed with reliable information that could aid in apprehending the miscreants in their midst

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