

Cleric, retired guard killed in Nigeria

2012-05-26 20:01

Kano - Gunmen killed a Muslim cleric and a retired prison guard on Saturday in northeastern Nigeria, residents and a medic said, amid a wave of such killings blamed on Islamist group Boko Haram.

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Early on Saturday, gunmen forced their way into the home of cleric Usman Muhammad in the Indiski area of the town of Potiskum in Yobe state and shot him dead, a resident said.

The attackers then broke into the home next door and shot dead the former prison guard, according to the resident.

A doctor at the government hospital in the city said two bodies with bullet wounds were deposited at the morgue on Saturday.

"The bodies were identified as a cleric who ran an Islamic seminary and a retired prison guard who were neighbours," said the doctor on condition of anonymity.

Another Muslim cleric was wounded on Friday by unknown gunmen in the state capital Damaturu, residents said.

Clerics have been targeted in the past due to their criticism of Boko Haram or when they were seen as linked to the government, among other reasons, though the details of the fresh shootings were unclear.

Potiskum, the economic capital of Yobe state, has been rocked by deadly attacks and targeted killings blamed on Boko Haram along with other areas of Nigeria's north.

Despite the imposition of an emergency decree, the deployment of troops and a dusk-to-dawn curfew in Potiskum, attacks persist in the city.

Two people were killed on Thursday when gunmen in a car opened fire at Potiskum's timber market, according to residents.

- AFP