

Police said 38 people died in the fighting, including three members of the security forces.

The clashes erupted on Monday between suspected members of the radical sect and security forces.

The Kala-Kato sect, also known as Maitatsine, has been present in several Muslim-dominated states in northern Nigeria for decades

It led religious uprisings in 1980 and 1992 which claimed thousands of lives in the northern cities of Kano and

The number of its followers is not known but estimated to run into several thousands.

Sect leader, Badamasi Alkaleri, was among those killed by security forces, the police said.

Police forces across the country have been placed on high alert in the aftermath of the clashes, as part of a bid to forestall further violence.

Life returned to normal on Wednesday in Bauchi where the Red Cross was organising burials of the victims. Soldiers and police deployed across the city had withdrawn by early Wednesday.

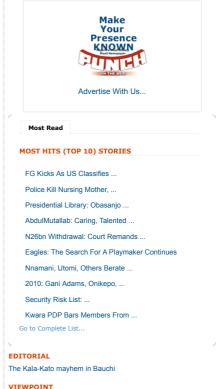
"So far, we have 40 dead bodies and we have secured a warrant from the justice commissioner for the burial," Adamu Abubakar, the head of the Red Cross office in Bauchi told AFP.

"With the heat, these bodies need to be buried quickly as they will decompose rapidly," said the worker at the morque, where the room was being cooled by a single fan.

Houses, cars and motorcycles were burnt during the clashes.

The Kala-Kato sect abhors modernity, including Western-style education and medicine. It bans television and radio in its members' homes and rejects any literature except the Koran.





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