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toll rises to 28

## Kaduna attack death toll rises to 28

APRIL 4, 2013 BY DAVID ATTAH, KADUNA

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**Kaduna State Governor Mukhtar Ramalan Yero**

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Death toll in the Easter Sunday tragedy at Atakad in Kaura Local Government of Kaduna State has risen to 28, the community chief, Tobias Wada, has confirmed.

Wada stated this when House of Representatives members from the southern part of the state visited him on Wednesday at Tachire where he was taking refuge.

Also, the National President of Atakad Community Development Association, Mr. Ishaya Kudien, said the refugee figure had risen to 10,000 as against the 5,000 initially recorded after the incident.

Gunmen, suspected to be Fulani herdsmen, last Sunday morning, launched an attack on Atakad, killing over 20 persons, while several others sustained varying degrees of injuries.

Wada, who said the herdsmen attacked from the Atakad mountain, said he was shocked over the level of the violence.

He added that during the attack, no fewer than 200 houses were razed, saying the villagers counted the houses burnt with the assistance of soldiers.

He said, "They went on killing and injuring people. Last Tuesday with the help of the JTF, we found corpse of 28 people and buried them. At least 200 houses were burnt in one of the villages."

"As the soldiers left last Tuesday, the Fulani took over the villages. No one can go back up the hill. Now, the rains have started. Some have lost family ones and are living as refugees. Yet they cannot go back and farm, after their entire food crops have been burnt. Next year will be terrible."

Chairman, House Committee on Sports, Godfrey Gaya, who led other lawmakers to the village, told the refugees that the lawmakers were there to commiserate with them.

Gaya said, "We have come here to tell you that any pain on any member of southern Kaduna is a pain on all. We have come here as one. We know how dignified, respectable and gentle the Atakad people are. For you to be reduced to destitute, to live in primary schools, after losing your loved ones and fortunes, is indeed sad, and we grief with you."

Gaya nonetheless urged the people to be vigilant, urging them to learn to forgive.

Kudien, who confirmed the refugee statistics, said over 10,000 persons were displaced during the attack.

"We heard the figures of refugees were given as 5,000. That is far below the truth. As at yesterday, we have about 10,000 refugees from the violence. Many are living with their relations, some are staying with family friends, and some have relocated, and more have joined the camps," he said.

Meanwhile, Governor Mukhtar Yero commiserated with the people over the killings.

Yero appealed to the people to remain calm, noting that the state government was working to ensure the security of lives and property of residents of the state.

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The governor, in a statement by his Director-General on Media and Publicity, Mallam Ahmed Maiyaki, also urged the people to volunteer information to security operatives to combat crimes in the state.