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Residents flee to Cameroon, Niger over B'Haram attacks

JANUARY 20, 2014 BY KAYODE IDOWU 1 COMMENT

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Boko Haram

Over 100 residents of Gashigar village, a Borno State border community with Niger Republic have fled to the neighbouring country and Cameroon, for fear of being killed by members of the Boko Haram sect. The insurgents had killed over 20 people in the area in the last one week.

Both residents and security sources who spoke to journalists on Sunday, said that Gashigar, which is a fishing community, is now a ghost of its old self.

Some residents said seven persons were killed and over 60 shops with eight vehicles

were burnt by gunmen who attacked the village on Thursday night at about 7pm.

The villagers had also complained that their situation was worsened by the absence of security agents in the community.

Authorities at the Borno State Police Command, who confirmed the incident, however debunked the villagers' claim that there was no police presence in their area.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Gideon Jibrin, said, "It is not correct that we don't have police formation in Mobbar Local Government Area and surrounding villages; if their claim is true then how come we are confirming the incident to you? The report got to the table of our state Commissioner of Police within the shortest possible time after it took place."

He added that apart from the seven persons that were killed, "three others who were running out of fear got drowned in the river."

It will be recalled that the attack on Gashigar came about four days after a similar siege was laid to two neighbouring villages where members of the same sect were believed to have attacked and killed five persons.

A former vice-chairman of Mobbar Local Government Area, Alhaji Talba Gashigar, who was an eyewitness, told journalists that the gunmen attacked their village at about 7pm on Thursday and began shooting sporadically and setting shops and vehicles ablaze.

He said, "We had to flee for our dear lives because the gunmen came in troops and there were no security personnel in our locality. We ran across the borders into the Cameroonian villages but seven of our fellow villagers were shot dead; and over 60 houses and shops were also burnt down completely."

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