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Boko Haram kills nine during church service

JUNE 3, 2014 BY JOHN ALECHENU, FIDELIS SORIWEI AND KAYODE IDOWU

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**Boko Haram sect**

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about 9.30am.

▶ Suspected members of Boko Haram on Sunday stormed a church in Attagara, Gwoza Local Government Area of Borno State and killed nine worshippers.

The attack which occurred barely 48 hours after the murder of the Emir of Gwoza, Alhaji Idrissa Timta, by the sect in a highway ambush, brought the service to an abrupt end.

It was gathered on Monday in Maiduguri that the insurgents arrived at the EYN Church and opened fire on worshippers at

A police source, who confirmed the killings to journalists, said the villagers and their neighbours from Agapalwa mobilised and confronted the insurgents, killing many of them.

The PUNCH learnt that the killing of the nine worshipers led to a reprisal by the villagers and their neighbours from Agapalwa that resulted in the death of 37 insurgents.

The Chairman of the Christians Association of Nigeria in the state, Rev. Titus Pona, confirmed the incident on the telephone to journalists.

He said, "I was told by my members that 37 suspected Boko Haram members were killed after an attack on Attangara and Agapalwa villages .

"Most of the villages attacked in Gwoza , Bayan Dutse area since a week ago have over 80 per cent Christian population."

A resident of the village who fled to Maiduguri, Matthew Adamu, said three of the insurgents were also arrested.

Adamu added, "The attack occurred at 9.30am at the EYN Church while the service was going on.

"Our church has some men who provide security, especially when service is going on. As we were holding our service on Sunday, we started hearing gunshots and everybody fled. Some jumped through the windows and ran into the bushes. Some who live close to the church managed to run to their homes.

"Men in the community however mobilised immediately and pursued the Boko Haram men.

"They came with motorcycles and a car but our people killed many of them and arrested three.

"I later learnt that nine people in the church were shot dead".

Attempts to get official confirmation from police and military authorities were unsuccessful as the mobile telephone lines of their spokesmen did not go through.

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