

24 killed, dozens injured in Borno, Plateau attacks

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Twenty-four people have been confirmed dead and 24 others injured, following separate attacks in Borno and Plateau states.

Residents of Damasak in the Mobbar Local Government Area, Borno State, on Friday told Governor Babagana Zulum that 18 persons were killed, 21 others injured and several properties destroyed, when Boko Haram members attacked the town with three gun trucks on Tuesday.

The properties destroyed included the United Nations humanitarian hub, private residential houses, a police station, the palace of the district head, a primary healthcare centre, and the GSM Village.

The residents lamented that the attack on Damasak was the sixth in two weeks by Boko Haram or Islamic State West Africa Province.

Zulum, who was in Damasak from Thursday to Friday, welcomed thousands of residents that had fled

to border communities in Niger Republic during the attack.

He was accompanied by the senator representing Borno North, Abubakar Kyari, who hails from Damasak; some other prominent politicians from the area and top officials of the state government.

The governor, as part of measures to restore normalcy to the town, held an operational meeting with the army and other security forces leadership in the area. He also presented an armoured personnel carrier and 11 patrol vehicles to boost the fight against insurgents in the area.

Zulum was said to have spent the night at Damasak alongside his entourage to end speculation that the town was occupied by the terrorist group.

According to a statement by his spokesman, Mallam Isa Gusau, Zulum during his stay in Damasak had interactions with soldiers and other forces involved in counterinsurgency operations.

The governor assured them of robust measures being put in place to avert future attacks on the town by the insurgents and ordered

the strengthening of agricultural activities in Damasak.

Boko Haram had occupied the agrarian town in 2014, declaring it part of its caliphate, but the town was later reclaimed by the military. There are however concerns that the terrorist group are once again interested in taking over the town to monetise its agricultural potential.

Meanwhile, six people were killed, while three others were injured on Thursday night in an attack by gunmen at Wereng community in the Riyom LGA of Plateau State.

The attack occurred days after eight people who were mining in the neighbouring Kuru community were killed in the same council area.

This comes days after gunmen attacked Ndar community in Bokkos Local Government Area and abducted four university students who were later rescued.

The lawmaker representing Riyom LGA in the state House of Assembly, Timothy Dantong, confirmed the fresh killing of six of his constituents to our correspondent in Jos on Friday.

Dantong said, "We had been hearing that there would be an

attack in the community but the people went about their normal business because they did nothing wrong. Then I woke up this morning (Friday) to hear of the killing of six of my people by gunmen who attacked the Wereng community last night (Thursday).

"When I made enquiries, I discovered that the armed attackers actually came around 10pm and killed six people, while three others who were injured during the attack have been rushed to the hospital. Right now, the people are digging the graves to bury those who were killed in the attack."

The lawmaker, who condemned the killings, said the matter had been reported to the police and other law enforcement agents.

The Police Public Relations Officer in Plateau State, Ubah Ogaba, when contacted, requested for more time to get details on the latest incident.

The PUNCH had reported that Governor Simon Lalong directed security agents to tighten security across all the 17 LGAs to guarantee safety of lives and property in the state.