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Heavy Police Patrol In Bauchi, After The Murder Of Pastor, Wife By Muslim Fanatics

Print version

April 20, 2010 08:33 (5 hours ago), 509 views

Police on Sunday heightened security in a mainly Muslim state of Bauchi in northern Nigeria in the wake of the murder of a Christian pastor and his wife by suspected Muslim fanatics.

"The situation is well under control with the prompt deployment of 200 police personnel who are effectively in control of the security situation in the area while investigation into the murder is on-going," Bauchi police spokesman Mohammed Baurau told AFP.

The burnt bodies of a Pentecostal pastor, Ishaya Kadah, and his wife, Selina, were discovered on Thursday by the police in Boto village, two days after they were kidnapped.

Local residents and officials allege the couple were abducted and killed by some Muslims from the village.

Police have arrested two suspects, but the killing has sparked calls for revenge from some Christians.

"Christian residents attended church service without any incident yet but they are still boiling with anger over the murder," resident Bitrus Kagama said in a telephone interview.

"There is an uneasy calm here," he added.

Security has been beefed in and around the capital Bauchi, which has previously been a hotbed of Muslim-Christian sectarian clashes, residents said.

"There are more policemen patrolling the streets of the metropolis since Friday," Bauchi resident Safiyanu Wunti told AFP on the phone.

Boto village is located in Bauchi's Tafawa Balewa district, which has a history of Christian-Muslim violence. It sits on the border with Plateau State, which has been rocked by sectarian violence in the last six years that has left hundreds dead.

The village is home to more than 100 Muslims displaced by the sectarian violence in Jos, capital of Plateau State, in January which the police said left 326 dead.

Meanwhile, the Nigerian army said Monday it had averted an attack by suspected Muslim extremists on a mainly Christian village in the flashpoint central Plateau State, killing two gunmen.

The pair were part of gang that planned to raid Bisichi village, on the outskirts of Jos, the capital of Plateau, where hundreds of people have been killed in ethno-religious violence, a military commander said.

The attack early Monday was foiled by members of a military task force deployed in the area following recent violence.

"Our guys were on regular patrol when they they received a distress call that the village was about to be attacked, so when they approached the village and in a shoot-out that followed, two of them (the gang) were gunned down," Brigadier General Donald Oji told AFP by phone.

A manhunt has been launched for the rest of the group which fled in the pre-dawn encounter.

"What would have been a major setback to peace was averted," Oji, the military spokesman for the area said.

A home-made rifle was recovered along with military-issue ammunition.

In what appeared to be a reprisal for earlier violence, herdsmen from the mainly Muslim Fulani clan launched a wave of attacks on five Christian villages in March, slaughtering more than 500 people according to state officials.

Oji said the population of Bisichi village, about 20 kilometres south of Jos, is a mixture of Christians and Muslims.

Jos has long been the centre of ethno-religious violence in a country whose 150 million population is divided almost equally between Christians and Muslims.

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Until all perpetrators are brought to book, these killing and violence will continue... i have always said this. The police always arrest "suspects" and NEVER prosecute them. They get re-cycled into the society and continue the fight.