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Gunmen kill 2 in Taraba, sack 3 communities in Niger

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**Sylvanus Viashima**, Jalingo and **John Adams**, Minna

Barely a week after the peace meeting in Abuja between the Jukun and the Tiv at the instance of the President Muhammadu Buhari, gunmen suspected to be Jukun militia

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yesterday attacked and killed two people in Yongogba village in Takum Local Government Area of Taraba State.

Meanwhile, barely 24 hours after armed bandits invaded Kukoki community in Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State and kidnapped six people, three communities in Rafi Local Government Area of the state have come under attack.

About 800 people have fled their homes and currently taking refuge in three different camps in the area.

A resident of Yongogba village, Mr. Kester Iorhemba, told our correspondent on the phone that the attackers who invaded the village from Takum burnt the entire village and looted valuable property.



According to Iorhemba, the attackers, riding on motorcycles and two Toyota Hilux vans, invaded the village at about 8.45am killing two people, with scores still missing. He explained that the attackers, who came through a farm, killed two people who were already on their farms before proceeding to burn the entire village.

The witness, who said the casualty figure may be higher as many people were already on the farm along the route the attackers came, called on Governor Darius Ishaku, who had said he has the capacity to end the killings in Taraba State, to do so immediately.

“I was on my way to the farm when I sighted two Toyota Hilux vans and motorcycles advancing towards our village. I couldn’t call the people back home because of poor network.

“Many people are still missing and I am sure many of those missing might have been killed by the attackers who came in their numbers.

“Our governor, who recently kicked against a commission of inquiry into the crisis, said he has the ability to solve the problem. So I want to plead with him to end these killings.”

Police public relations officer in the state, David Misal, could not return his calls or reply to text messages sent to his phone for confirmation.

Ishaku had told our correspondent that he was capable of ending the hostilities without interference from the federal or Benue State governments.

In Niger, the heavily armed bandits arrived the communities in 24 motorcycles with three of them on each of the motorcycles.

The communities are Rafin-wayam, Rafin-kwakwa and Gidan Dogo-Gurgu. The entire communities were thrown into confusion as people, including women and children, ran in different directions for safety.

About 800 people from the three communities have been forced to relocate, with majority of them staying in a temporary camp in some structures including schools in Kagara, the headquarters of the local government.



A resident of one of the communities, Malam Dahiru Mohammed, said the bandits surrounded his community, Rafin Wayam, to prevent anybody from escaping as they ransacked houses looking for what to carry.

“They took everything from us, including bread and beverages. They didn’t kill anybody but they collected all our valuables,” he narrated

After about two hour of operation, which began at about 6.45pm, the bandits left the communities in a convoy and headed to Pangu-Gari, another community in the area.

Meanwhile, youths from Kagara trooped to the streets to protest what they called “incessant” armed bandits’ attacks in the area in the last one month.

The placard carrying youths chanted anti-government slogans and blocked the major highway leading to Brinin Gwari in Kaduna State.

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