

Boko Haram terrorists kill 17 herders in Borno

Boko Haram terrorists have reportedly killed 17 herders and stole their cattle, following clashes in the troubled Borno State.

According to AFP, the hoodlums on Saturday attacked herders guarding their cattle in a pasture near Airanne village in Mafa district.

"Seventeen herders were killed in the fight and all their cattle taken away," militia leader Babakura Kolo said yesterday, adding:

"The herders put (up) resistance but were outgunned and outnumbered by the attackers, who had better weapons."

Another militiaman, Ibrahim Liman, confirmed the toll.

He said the militants launched the attack from camps in nearby Gajiganna forest, where they relocated after being partially forced out from their stronghold in Sambisa forest by rival Daesh and the Nigerian Army.

Daesh split from Boko Haram in 2016 and rose to become the dominant group in the region's long-running turmoil.

It seized swathes of territory under Boko Haram con-

trol after leader Abubakar Shekau was killed in clashes with Daesh in May last year.

Boko Haram and Daesh have increasingly been targeting civilians, particularly loggers, farmers and herders, accusing them of spying on them for the military and the local anti-jihadist militia.

But herders, who pay a levy to the militants, are usually allowed to let their cattle graze safely in territory under militant control.

Violence in the North East has claimed over 40,000 people and displaced around 2 million from their homes since 2009, according to the United Nations.

The conflict has split into neighbouring Niger, Chad, and Cameroon, prompting the creation of a regional military force to fight the militants.

The killings, abductions, and looting in the North East are part of an overall security crisis in Nigeria.

Voters will go to the polls on February 25 to elect a successor to President Muhammadu Buhari, who is stepping down after two terms (eight years), the constitutional limit.