

# Four Killed in Bandits' Raid on Niger Communities

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By Laleye Dipo

No fewer than four villagers were killed and some others injured when bandits yesterday raided some communities in the Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State.

Among the injured, according to an eyewitness, is the village head of Jabowah, whose name could not be immediately ascertained as at press time.

He was reportedly shot on the leg by the bandits.

It was gathered that the bandits also rustled about 300 cattle, with 50 of them belonging to a former Chairman of the Local Government Council, Alhaji Audu Yerima, while the head of the fishermen in the area, Malam Talagbe, was said to have lost 100 cattle in the raid that lasted over four hours.

An eyewitness said the bandits, who were over 50, rode on motorcycles and moved from community to community killing and maiming the villagers.

The bandits were also said to have taken over the Erena Bridge linking Erena with other parts of the local government area, making exit and entry impossible.

The casualty would have been higher according to the eyewitness but for the fact that some of the villagers had migrated to safer grounds, especially Bosso town near Minna

where they are taking refuge as a result of previous invasions.

It was gathered that the absence of people in the communities attacked angered the bandits who in turn, torched many houses.

Some of the communities attacked include Galadiman Kogo, Yinakpa, kapna, Aleyin, Rafin Senyin, and Amuko and Farindoki.

One eyewitness said the bandits had given prior notice of their intention to raid the communities, a piece of information that was allegedly passed to the security agencies.

"They operated without any challenge. Like I told you earlier, these bandits moved with their motorcycles like the speed of light. The way they ride the motorcycles is very scary, even when they are moving the cattle, they are always in a hurry," the eyewitness said.

When contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Wasiu Abiodun, an Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) confirmed the incident, saying two villagers were killed and a village head injured while some cattle were rustled.

Abiodun said regular policemen and men of the mobile task force, including local vigilantes, had been deployed in the communities to restore law and order.

The Senator representing Niger East senatorial zone, Alhaji Mohammed Sani Musa, had while reacting to last week's attack, which claimed the lives of seven villagers, urged President Muhammadu Buhari to direct the establishment of a military base in the area as one of the steps to stop frequent attacks and "killing of my people."

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