

Death toll in Bauchi riot rises to 70

BAUCHI—DOZENS more bodies were recovered after violent clashes between security forces and Islamists in northern Nigeria, bringing the death toll to around 70, a count at a hospital morgue showed yesterday.

An AFP reporter listed 42 bodies on the floor of the morgue in the city of Bauchi, all with bullet or machete wounds. Another 25 bodies, mostly young people including minors, had been placed in cold storage rooms.

A morgue employee said "the bodies were brought in on Monday" after clashes erupted in Bauchi between suspected members of a radical Islamist sect and security forces.

Police late Monday said 38 people died in the fighting, including three members of the security forces.

Police forces across the country have been placed on high alert in the aftermath of the clashes as part of a bid to forestall further violence.

The Kala-Kato sect, also known as Maitatsine, has been present in several Muslim-dominated states in northern Nigeria for decades.

It led religious uprisings in 1980 and 1992 which claimed thousands of lives in the northern cities of Kano and Yola.

The number of its followers is not known but estimated to run into several thousands.

Sect leader Badamasi Saleh Alkalari was among those killed by security forces, the police said.

Soldiers and police de-

ployed across Bauchi had withdrawn by early Wednesday as life began returning to normal.

"Peace has been restored to the Zango area which was rocked by violence on Monday. However our men are on high alert in the event of any breakdown of law and order," Bauchi state police commissioner, Atiku Kafur, told AFP.

The Red Cross was organising burials for the victims.

"So far we have 40 dead bodies and we have secured a warrant from the justice commissioner for the burial," Adamu Abubakar, the head of the Red Cross office in Bauchi told AFP.

"With the heat, these bodies need to be buried quickly as they will decompose rapidly," said the worker at the morgue, where the room was being cooled by a single fan.

Houses, cars and motorcycles were burnt during the

clashes.

The Kala-Kato sect rejects modernity, including Western-style education and medicine. It bans television and radio in its members' homes and rejects any literature except the Koran.

A sect with similar inclinations, known as Boko Haram, led an insurrection in July. At least 800 people were killed when security forces crushed the uprising in near-by Borno State.

More ex-govs for trial in 2010, says EFCC

By Emma Ovuakporie

ABUJA—MORE former governors and top government functionaries serving and retired will face trial next year as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, concludes plans to file charges after it had carried out conclusive investigations on them.

It was reliably gathered yesterday that the jigsaw puzzle shrouding the money laundering tactics of former governors has been uncovered by operatives of the anti-graft agency who have been working round the clock in the last 12 months.

According to our source, the jigsaw puzzle with which these men launder money has been revealed because what they do is to expose the

primary source of the laundered money and conceal other sources that it is channelled or transferred into.

The source added, "For instance, an agency or company pays money into a particular company claiming that a deed has been perfected, then the company in turn pays out the money to the eventual beneficiaries.

"What this translates into is that the money goes back to the primary source who initially paid out the money to the other company and once you miss this connectivity you start all over."

Situations like this make it almost impossible to track down culprits as they try as much as they can to conceal other sources that the money has been moved into."

The source explained further that most of these former governors, ministers and the key functionaries junketing

from one place to another will have a lot to vomit next year though we are trying to make them feel free before they are picked up."

What we have done is to quietly investigate them, give them the impression that all is well before we get them into our nets as we enter into the new year."

On recovered monies the source said, the country had lost well over N500 billion to corruption in the last 10 years but well over N500 billion was recovered as at June this year though he cannot readily lay his hands on the current figures.

"As for the bank debts, we have recovered over N200 billion as at the first week of this December, debts from the numerous debtors scattered all over the country, but our priority next year is to get hold of government looted monies."