

# *At Least 77 Dead in Attacks on Nigerian Cities*

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Bauchi, December 3 (RHC)-- At least 77 people have been killed in attacks by suspected Islamic extremists who struck two northeast Nigerian state capitals, health workers said Tuesday. The deaths from Monday's attacks bring the toll to at least 247 people reported killed in a week of increasing violence from an Islamic uprising in the northeast of Africa's biggest oil producer.

The casualties indicate heavy fighting after scores of insurgents invaded the town before dawn Monday and fought for several hours. The heavy fighting prevented the attackers from taking the governor's office, which includes a military armory, according to residents.

Thousands of people have been killed and 1.6 million driven from their homes in the 5-year-old insurgency by Boko Haram, the West African nation's homegrown Islamic extremist group that is holding dozens of cities and towns along Nigeria's northeast border where it has declared an Islamic caliphate.

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