

# Terrorists dare Gov Bago, hit another Niger community

From John Adams, Minna

## • Several fear dead, bridge blown

**BARELY** five days after Governor Umaru Mohammed Bago threatened to fish out bandits and other terrorists including their informants from their hideout in Niger State, insurgents suspected to be members of Boko Haram under the command of Mallam Sadiku have reportedly blown up a bridge linking many communities and markets in Borgu Local Government Area of the state with explosive device.

The blast occurred in Woro, a neighboring community between Niger and Kwara states.

It was gathered that between Nuku and Woro, a vehicle hit an Improvised Explosive Device (IED), planted by terrorists between Nuku and Woro, killing all occupants on-board. The casualty figure remained uncertain in the blast local sources said occurred in the early hours of yesterday along Wawa-Luma-Guffanti road.

According to multiple sources in Niger and Kwara states, the Babanna major border market that holds every Monday was crippled due to the incident.

Chief Press Secretary to the Governor of Kwara State, Rafiu Ajakaye, confirmed that the explosion was caused by an improvised explosive device (IED) that detonated along a

road near the border community.

According to him, the device went off as a vehicle passed over it, resulting in the immediate death of a male occupant.

"Sadly, the man died instantly, while his passenger, a woman travelling with a little child, sustained injuries," Ajakaye said.

He added that the injured woman has been taken to a medical facility where she is responding to treatment, while the child escaped unhurt.

The development has triggered panic among residents, who are still grappling with the aftermath of earlier attacks in the area.

Also reacting, the Special Assistant on Media to the Kaiama Local Government Chairman, ZuluQharmain Shero Musa, confirmed that the explosion caused casualties, although the exact number of victims has yet to be determined.

Musa said preliminary findings suggest the explosive device may have been planted by suspected insurgents, believed to be linked to Boko Haram.

"A car drove over an IED. We believe it was planted by Boko Haram members," he said.

The latest incident comes weeks after a similar attack in February, when armed men reportedly stormed

the community in the early hours, firing sporadically and forcing residents to flee, while homes and valuables were destroyed.

That earlier attack displaced several families, disrupted livelihoods, and intensified calls for increased security presence in the area.

With the renewed violence, residents have again appealed to government and security agencies to take decisive measures to protect lives and prevent further attacks in the community.

Like part of Kwara, Borgu and Agwara local government areas of Niger State have been under severe attacks for several months with terrorists attacking the communities.

The desolate route links the Kainji Lake National Park forest, where two Jihadi groups—Ansaru/Mamuda and Boko Haram have held sway and established bases with Banana/Lumma, a border town with Benin Republic.

While one of the groups operating in the area is into felling of trees for timber business, the other is said to be into mining business in the mineral rich Kainji National Park forest and have been operating for over five years now.

Our source said the incident and

its timing showed that the terrorists have taken over the areas and were determined to cripple the economies and social life of the people, exploiting the absence of security in the areas.

A commercial driver, Ahmed Yusuf who was conveying traders to Babana market yesterday morning said the road has been totally cut off, saying, "no car could pass through the road because the bridge had been cut into two."

He disclosed that only motorcycles were able to manoeuvre through the debris under the bridge.

The development has affected the ever busy Babanna border market, which holds every Monday, forcing traders and buyers to suspend activities due to the damaged bridge.

Another local source described the situation as devastating, when he spoke to our correspondent on phone, saying the bridge serves as a vital link for surrounding communities and plays a key role in facilitating trade and social interaction.

He appealed to both the Federal Government and the Niger State governments to urgently intervene by reconstructing the bridge to restore normalcy and revive economic activities in the area.

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# Zamfara Speaker 12 PDP lawmakers defect to APC