

Gunmen kill soldier, abduct 13 passengers on Okene–Auchi highway



Gunmen disguised in military uniforms have killed a soldier and abducted 13 passengers during coordinated attacks on two commercial vehicles along the Okene–Auchi highway.

According to Zagazola Makama, a counter-terrorism publication, the incident occurred at about 5:35 pm on Tuesday when gunmen intercepted a green Toyota Sienna, conveying nine passengers from Abuja to Delta State.

The publication reported that six passengers were abducted from the vehicle, while three others were rescued.

Zagazola Makama added that the attackers also stopped a white Toyota Hiace bus, conveying 11 passengers from Delta to Abuja, during the same operation.

“Seven passengers were abducted from the Hiace bus while four were rescued,” Makama reported.

The publication noted that a serving non-commissioned officer of the Nigerian Army, who was among the passengers and had identified himself as a soldier, was shot by the attackers.

“He sustained gunshot injuries to his legs and thighs and was later confirmed dead,” Makama reported.

Both vehicles were recovered and towed to a police station for safe keeping, while five empty shells of 7.62mm ammunition suspected to be from an AK-47 rifle were recovered at the scene as exhibits.

The corpse of the deceased soldier was deposited at the Okengwe general hospital mortuary for autopsy, while statements were obtained from the rescued victims to aid investigation.

Meanwhile, troops have launched joint rescue operations, including bush combing and intensive surveillance along the highway, in order to rescue the abducted passengers and arrest the perpetrators.

The publication said authorities assured motorists that measures were being intensified to secure the Okene–Auchi corridor and prevent further attacks.

Moses Yamu, the public relations officer of the Edo State police command, did not respond to calls and messages at press time.

