

# B/Haram kills 65 mourners in Borno

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- Locals: It's a reprisal
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A week after some communities confronted Boko Haram insurgents, killed 11 of them and seized several rifles, the terrorists launched a reprisal and killed no fewer than 65 people at the weekend.

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Most of those killed were returning from on a funeral procession in a village in Nganzai Local Government Area in northern part of Borno State.

The casualty figure was given yesterday by the Chairman of Nganzai LGA, Mohammed Bulama, while briefing Governor Babagana Zulum, who was on a condolence visit to Gajiram, the headquarters of the local government.

Dozens of people are still missing after the attack which left many locals with life threatening injuries, *Daily Trust* learnt.

“Two weeks ago, Boko Haram insurgents attacked Badu village but the attack was repelled by the villagers and members of the vigilante group,” the chairman later told reporters.

“The villagers resisted the attack, killed 11 insurgents and recovered 10 AK-47 rifles in the encounter.

“On Saturday at about 11:40 am, the insurgents came on a reprisal mission, attacking mourners at a grave yard in the area, killing over 60 persons and injuring 11 others,” the chairman said.

He added that the wounded had been taken to the Specialist Hospital, Maiduguri, for treatment.

Earlier in Gajiram, Governor Zulum reassured his commitment to supporting security agencies to protect lives and property in the state.

He said that the state government would not relent until permanent peace was restored to the state.

While condemning the attack, Zulum called on the people to be vigilant and cooperate with security agencies in their communities.

He prayed for the repose of the souls of the deceased and the families, the fortitude to bear the loss.

The governor also visited Specialists' Hospital Maiduguri, and sympathised with persons who sustained injuries in the attack.

Security and vigilante sources told our correspondent that the attackers, suspected to be Boko Haram terrorists ambushed the mourners and left many of them dead.

A security sources said the attack was launched by fighters of factional Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP) who operate along the shores of the Lake Chad region.

“The attack was a retaliatory mission in the aftermath of the killing of 11 ISWAP members by local hunters about,” the source said.

### **The cause of the attack**

Another source said trouble started on Tuesday, July 16 when locals in Shiataram, Badu Mallam Kyarriri and Zaiwa communities came together and pursued the Boko Haram terrorists from Lamisu Bukar Bulala village and killed 11 terrorists.

He said 13 Boko Haram fighters ran away after the siege by the locals.

“After they killed 11 Boko Haram fighters, the villagers went to Nganzai and handed over the weapons they recovered from the terrorists to the authorities,” the source said.

“They were tired with the antics of the terrorists and therefore decided to confront them,” he said.

He added that days after the feat, the terrorists mobilized and launched a reprisal that led to the death of 65 people.

“The attackers took the communities by surprise...They attacked at killed everyone on site,” he said.

Another source said during the reprisal, the attackers first stormed Badu Mallam Kyariri village where they reportedly killed 10 people.

“They told the people that they were heading to Lamisu, Bukar Bulala and Zaiwa and they keep to their words.

“They killed over 37 people in the village while a lot are yet to be accounted for because many people ran into the bush. Already, aide workers and vigilantes have started recovering some corpses and so far, the total death toll is around 65,” he said.

Vigilante sources said the attackers arrived on motorbikes and opened fire on a group of men as they walked back from a funeral.

“We have buried almost 60 persons since Saturday, we are still searching for missing locals,” one of the vigilantes said.

According to him, “Earlier, the vigilante recovered more than 20 dead bodies on Saturday but the death toll has risen to nearly 30 from Badu Abachari. The men were returning to Badu Kuluwu from nearby Goni Abachari village, where they had attended the funeral.”

A community leader in Nganzai said since the Boko Haram crisis became full blown around 2013, communities that stood up against the terrorists “paid dearly with their lives.”

According to him, many communities around Kala Balge, Marte, Monguno and others have been wiped out by the terrorists once they attempt to resist domination.

“This is the time for a new approach to the whole issue because thousands of people who stood up against the terrorists have been killed,” he said.

“Communities that confront the terrorists deserve special attention in form of massive deployment of troops,” he added.

### **Buhari orders action**

President Muhammadu Buhari yesterday condemned the attack on a funeral procession.

The President had reportedly received assurances from the armed forces that the terrorists who committed these killings “will pay a big price for their action”.

“The Federal Government is firmly and resolutely committed to taking all necessary measures to safeguard the nation’s security. This administration is determined to end the menace of terrorism,” said the President via a statement by one of his spokespersons, Garba Shehu.

He said already, a major exercise has begun to hunt down the attackers with air patrols by the nation’s Air Force and ground operations by the army.

The President assured the residents of Maiduguri and the citizens settled in IDP camps that they will receive increased protection from further attacks by the assailants.

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