

26 killed in Kaduna, Edo, Osun attacks

From Mohammed Yaba (Kaduna),
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At least 26 persons were reported killed, and many others injured, in attacks by bandits, suspected cultists and a communal clash in Kaduna, Edo and Osun States respectively, over the weekend.

Six persons were also abducted in two separate operations by kidnapers in Tungan-Maje, a suburb of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), and Jalingo, the capital of Taraba State.

Following a Saturday evening attack on Kutemeshi village in Kuyello district of Birnin Gwari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, 16 persons were buried by the community yesterday amidst tears.

This followed another attack that claimed five lives in Kujeji village of Kajuru Local Government Area of the State.

In Edo, gunmen suspected to be cultists killed four persons in different attacks linked to rising hostilities between rival cult groups.

Cult clashes between members of Eyiye and rival Black Axe confraternity groups since January 1 have reportedly claimed over 18 lives.

Violent conflict, which broke out between Ilobu and Erin-Osun towns Osun State on Saturday has claimed the life of at least one person, and declaration of curfew on Irepodun and Orolu Local Government Areas.

21 killed in two Kaduna attacks

Daily Trust reports that bandits who had been terrorising Birnin Gwari area killed at least 16 and injured 15 others during the weekend attack. Kaduna State government, however, put the casualty figure at 14.

Residents told our correspondent that in an attack that lasted over three hours with no assistance from security agents, gunmen invaded Kutemeshi, a village of about four kilometers to Sabuwa town in Katsina State around 5:30 pm on motorcycles.

Confirming the killings to Daily Trust, councillor representing Kuyello ward, Abdulrahman Yusuf said 16 people were buried on Sunday while the injured had been conveyed to Kaduna city and Katsina State for medical attention.

He described as unfortunate that only the local vigilante had come to the assistance of the people during the attack. "The people are in despair, they don't know what to do and there is tension in the area. People are scared and worried that there may be another attack and they have nowhere to go to," he told

our correspondent.

Having participated in the burial, Yusuf said: "The burial started around 10 am and ended around 1 pm. 15 people were buried and then the corps of a Fulani man who was killed by the bandits was discovered from a neighbouring ruga settlement but was buried separately. Among those injured, nine were critical and taken to Kaduna for treatment."

He urged the state government to deploy security personnel to Kuyello and environs adding that: "We only depend on God and the local vigilante. The few mobile police here are not enough to protect the community," he said.

In a statement released yesterday, the Kaduna State Commissioner for Internal Security and Home Affairs, Samuel Aruwan confirmed the attack on Kutemeshi and gave the names of the 14 persons he said were killed in the attack.

Those killed, according to him, were; Salani Barume, Yahaya Bello, Amadu Dan Korau, Samaila Niga, Jamilu Haruna, Lawal Majiya and Dan Malam Rabo. Others include Dauda Kafinta, Hassan Mai Makani, Bashir Haruna, Lawal Ali, Mu'azu Haruna, Mai Unguwa Sa'adu and Harisu Bako.

Similarly, Aruwan said another attack on Kujeji village in Kajuru had claimed five lives and left several others with bullet wounds while several houses, food stores and warehouses loaded with building materials and a church were burnt.

"The following citizens were killed: Bulus Jatau, Hanatu Emmanuel, Bitrus Tuna, Yohanna Mika and Monday Ayuba while those injured include Bulus Sambayi and Godwin Yakubu," he said.

He said Governor Nasir El-Rufai, who has been monitoring the security situation since Saturday morning expressed sadness over the attacks and consoled families that lost their loved ones.

Disparate attacks claim 4 in Edo

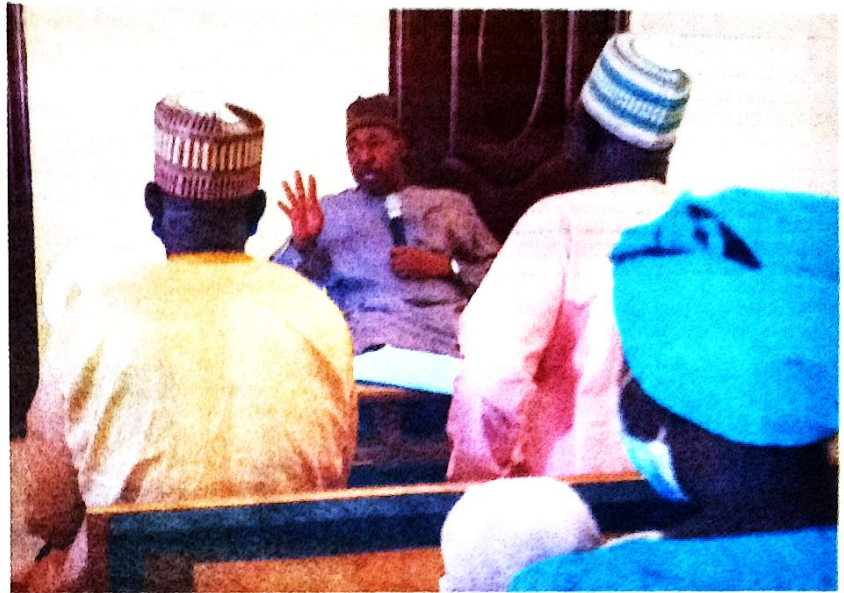
Gunmen suspected to be cultists killed a tricycle operator simply identified as Tony, in Ohovbe community, Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area of Edo State.

It was gathered that the victim was returning from school when he was shot dead by his assailant believed to be members of a rival cult group.

It was further gathered that the gunmen after shooting him dead, used machetes to inflict deep cuts on his remains while chanting cult songs, before leaving the scene.

The victim whose wife was delivered of a baby girl in January was shot dead at about 7:30 am on Friday.

In another attack on Shelle Bar, along the Third Circular Road by Esigie junction, a



■ Borno State Governor Babagana Zulum interacts with teachers in Gwoza weekend

police constabulary and the owner of the bar were also reportedly shot dead.

It was learnt the armed police constabulary who was guarding the bar was sitting close to the bar owner when the gunmen in a Toyota Sienna car opened fire, killing them on the spot.

Daily Trust gathered that the owner of the bar brought the policeman in response to rising insecurity in the Benin metropolis.

A female passer-by, who was reportedly hit by a stray bullet from the Toyota Sienna car was said to have died on the spot.

When contacted, the state Police Command Public Relations officer, SP Chidi Nwanbuzor said he was yet to be briefed on the incidents.

1 killed in communal conflict

Osun State Governor, Adegboyega Oyetola yesterday imposed 24-hour curfew in Irepodun and Orolu Local Government Areas of the State, following the violence that broke out between Ilobu and Erin-Osun towns in which one person was killed.

The Secretary to the State Government, Prince Wole Oyeibamiji, said the declaration of curfew became necessary to douse tension in the troubled area and that the curfew would subsist until further notice.

Many residents fled their towns as the communal clash between the two towns aggravated on Saturday.

Daily Trust gathered that the two communities started fighting on Saturday over land tussle. A community leader in the area said the traditional rulers of the two towns had an altercation on the phone over the land on Saturday. Consequently, some youths from the two towns started fighting and shooting at themselves. One person was killed and several others sustained bullet injury.

The Police Public Relations

Officer for Osun State Police Command, Yemisi Opolola confirmed the incident.

Customs officer, 4 others abducted

Armed men believed to be kidnapers, also at the weekend abducted five people in two separate attacks in Tungan-Maje, Gwagwalada Area Council and Pegi, Kuje Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), respectively.

Daily Trust gathered that the kidnapers raided Tungan-Maje in the early hours of Sunday, taking a serving customs officer and three other residents' hostage.

A source in the community said the gunmen who got to the suburb around 1:00 am from a nearby bush, started by shootings into the air sporadically, which woke many people up.

A resident, who didn't want his name published, said two stand-out houses in Unguwar Dankusa, the area where the attack was carried out, were robbed by the gunmen, who broke in by pulling down parts of the walls.

"Both the two houses were well protected with security wire and very sophisticated gates. "But yet, the gunmen changed their tactics by breaking into the houses by pulling down parts of walls," the source explained.

It was gathered that members of the vigilante in the community engaged the gunmen in a shootout for about two hours while the operation lasted, with the aim of scaring them off but the daredevil kidnapers accomplished their mission.

Efforts to speak to the Divisional Police Officer of Zuba, CSP Badewole Bola, were not successful, as he could not answer calls made to his contact by our reporter ahead of filing this report.

But a senior police officer

in the division has confirmed the incident, adding that the police were patrolling the bush where the kidnapers have headed with their victims, in an effort to rescue them.

Also, gunmen on Friday night attacked Pegi, a community in the Kuje Area Council, which has been under series of attacks by kidnapers in the past one year. The kidnapers abducted one person and shot three others.

Daily Trust gathered that the victims of the attack were ambushed by the gunmen on the lonely road to the community while on their way home around 8:30pm.

The kidnapers tried stopping the cars they were in but couldn't. Chairman Pegi Community Development Association (PECDA), Isaac Aderibigbe, confirmed the attack to Daily Trust.

When contacted, the FCT Police Command Spokesperson, ASP Maryam Yusuf, forwarded a press release of which was earlier issued by the command on Saturday.

The statement indicated that the command had arrested six kidnapers and rescued two victims but the incident happened in Apo, Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) of the FCT.

Abducted Taraba NLC chairperson freed

Taraba State Chairman of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Peter Jediel, regained freedom last yesterday after he was abducted at about 1.12 am on Sunday from his home at Sunkani, headquarters of Ardo-Kola Local Government Area.

It was gathered that the gunmen numbering about 12 shot sporadically to scare people in the neighborhood before gaining entrance into Jediel's house.