

2 feared dead, vehicles destroyed as thugs attack Goje

Abdullateef Salau, Abuja
& Haruna Gimba Yaya,
Gombe

- Ex-gov calls for probe
- Your thugs behind violence – Gombe govt

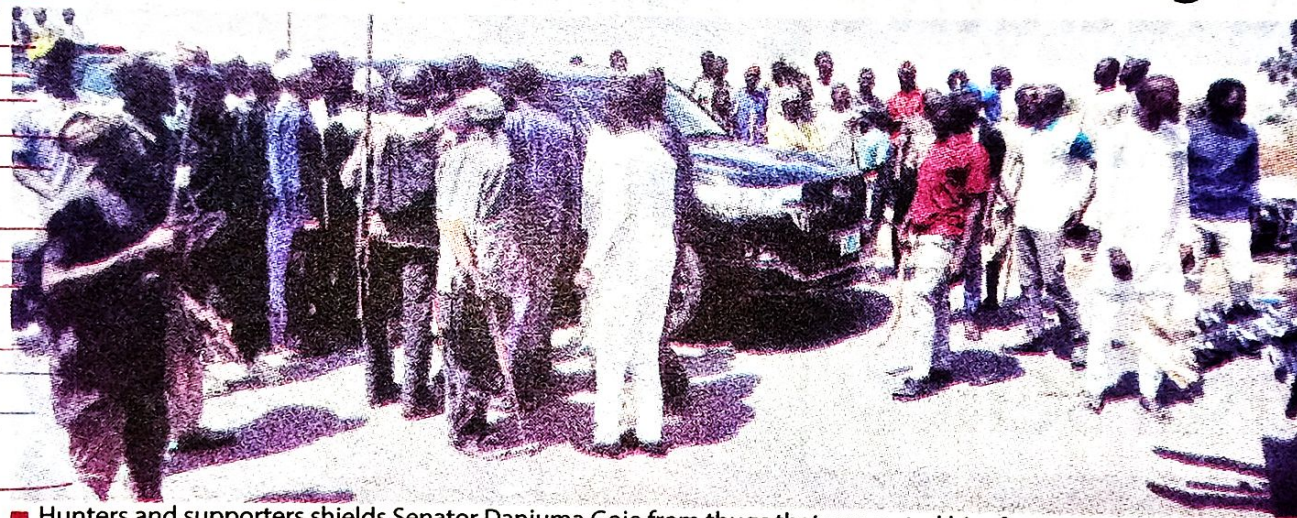
There was violence in Gombe State yesterday as thugs blocked the convoy of the former governor, Senator Muhammad Danjuma Goje, in an effort to deny him entry into the state.

Goje visited the state after being away for some months to attend the wedding of his granddaughter, Fatima Abdullahi Musa. He landed at the Gombe International Airport, Lawanti in Akko Local Government Area by 10:40am.

He rode in a long motorcade comprising of supporters, well-wishers and other political associates from the airport.

However, on reaching the roadblock near the airport, thugs appeared from the bush and attacked the convoy. This led to a clash with his supporters who had tramped to the airport to receive him.

A car was burnt and over 20 vehicles vandalised, including that of Goje, which had its window screens smashed. Two people were reportedly killed while several others sustained varying degrees



■ Hunters and supporters shields Senator Danjuma Goje from thugs that prevented him from entering Gombe town yesterday

of injury.

Although police personnel were able to disperse the thugs to pave the way for Goje and his entourage, however, on reaching the City Gate, near the International Conference Centre, the convoy met bonfires on the only road leading to Gombe metropolis. This led to another round of clashes as residents scammed for safety into nearby bushes.

Some senior police officers at the scene asked

Goje to turn back, citing "an order from above."

However, some youths and hunters in Goje's entourage trekked while accompanying the serving senator for the 12-kilometre drive into the metropolis.

But they encountered other thugs who had set bonfires near the Gombe old market in the Jekadafari area of the metropolis, a situation that forced shops and business premises to temporarily shut down.

The former governor

had to change the route to his private residence at the Pantami area of the metropolis, arrived at 4pm and addressed awaiting crowd of supporters that converged at the forecourt.

Reacting to the event, the state's Commissioner for Information and Culture, Julius Ishaya Lapes, in a statement blamed Goje for the violence.

He accused the senator of mobilising armed men to cause mayhem under the pretext of accompanying

him.

While sympathising with families of the victims, Lapes commended the security agencies for their timely intervention and vowed that the perpetrators of the unfortunate act would be brought to book.

He said the state government would not stand by and watch desperate politicians unleash terror on innocent citizens, to the extent of getting people killed.

Meanwhile, Goje's

media aide, Lilian Nworie, alleged that it was the aide-de-camp to Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya that blocked and attacked his convoy while on his way to attend the wedding of his granddaughter, Fatima Abdullahi Musa in Gombe.

She said the senator's trip was peaceful until the governor's aides, including his aide-de-camp and his personal driver, blocked the road.

"It is unfortunate that one live was lost and many cars vandalized, including the senator's vehicle. They smashed the windscreen. All efforts to make the governor's aide-de-camp remove the blockade yielded no result as he insisted that he got instruction from the above that the former governor should not be allowed into the town."

Daily Trust Saturday reports that the relationship between Goje and his erstwhile godson and successor has turned sour over the control of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in the state.

Efforts to get the reaction of the police public relations officer in Gombe, SP Obed Mary Malum, were not successful, as she did not pick her calls.

Terrorism spreading beyond