

News

Gunmen torch police station, kill inspector, two others

From Lemmy Ughagbe (Abuja) and Njadvava Musa (Maiduguri), with agency report

FRESH violence erupted in Borno State on Monday and yesterday, as gunmen suspected to be members of *Boko Haram* sect, in separate operations, torched the Konduga Divisional Police Station, killing an inspector (name withheld) and two others in Lassa town.

Meanwhile, the Federal High Court, Abuja Division, yesterday rejected a bid by Senator Ali Ndume to stop his trial for alleged acts of terrorism and sponsorship of the violent *Boko Haram* Islamic sect.

In a related development,

Court rejects Ndume's plea
Cameroun fingers Nigerian group in tourists' kidnap

President Francois Hollande confirmed that seven French tourists from one family, including four children, were yesterday kidnapped in Northern Cameroun and said he suspected a Nigerian group was responsible, according to the *Agence France Presse (AFP)*.

The gunmen, according to an eyewitness, used Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and petro-bombs in torching the police station and vehicles packed in the place. Konduga and Lassa towns are 40 kilometres east and 195 kilometres south of Maiduguri, the state

capital, and suspected hide-outs for the *Boko Haram* sect.

The source told *The Guardian* that the gunmen took the policemen at Konduga unawares when they stormed the place, disclosing that the official vehicle of the slain police officer along with several other vehicles at the station were also set ablaze.

At Lassa, police sources also said that gunmen had on Monday evening stormed two houses and killed a member of a vigilance group and farmer. A Lassa resident claimed that the victims were

alleged to be informants to the security agents. The State Police Public Relations Officer, Gideon Jibrin, confirmed the incident, adding, however, that no arrests had been made.

Meanwhile, Ndume had filed an application praying for an interim stay of action to enable him pursue his appeal seeking to overturn two interlocutory orders made by the trial court. In his ruling, however, Justice Gabriel Kolawole refused his application for interim stay. Instead, he granted Ndume 60 days to prosecute his appeal.

The matter is therefore adjourned to May 6 for mention while the accused/appli-

cant would continue to enjoy his bail. The court also admitted three DVDs that contained alleged record of communication between the accused/applicant and the *Boko Haram* members.

On the issue of kidnap of tourists in Cameroun, Hollande said: "What is most probable is they were taken to Nigeria," adding that they were seized by a Nigeria-based "terrorist group that we know well." The tourists were reportedly kidnapped by unidentified men in Northern Cameroun, near the border with Nigeria, a source close to the French Embassy in Yaounde said.

Court docks 15
Russians, remands
them in Ikoyi prison

By Joseph Onyekwore

THE Nigerian Government yesterday arraigned 15 Russians before a Federal High Court, Lagos, over unlawful importation of firearms and ammunition into the country.

The accused were charged together with their vessel, *MV Myre Seadiver*, on a four-count charge bordering on alleged unlawful importation and possession of firearms, as well as non-declaration of the content of the vessel. They, however, pleaded not guilty to the charge.

The accused are Zhelyazkov Andrey, Savchenko Sergel, Chichkanov Vasily, Varlygin Igor, Komilov Alexander