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Gunmen kill 31 in Zamfara, six die in Yobe suicide attack

By Njadvara Musa (Damaturu) Terhembra Daka, Karls Tsokar, Segun Olaniyi (Abuja) and Isah Ibrahim (Gusau) on July 6, 2015



- Jonathan urges support for Buhari against Boko Haram
- Saraki, Dogara condemn attacks on worship places
- More soldiers to face court martial soon, says Minimah

A SUSPECTED Boko Haram suicide bomber, disguised as a worshipper yesterday detonated an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) at the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Potiskum in Yobe State, killing the pastor and five other people.

Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) of Yobe Police Command, Toyin Gbadeges, in a telephone interview with The Guardian said that worshippers were the target of the

bomber.

In Zamfara State, gunmen struck at Cigama village of Birnin Magaji Local Council Saturday evening killing about 31 people while dozens sustained various degrees of injuries.

In the face of the attacks, former President Goodluck Jonathan has urged Nigerians to cooperate with President Muhammadu Buhari in the war against terrorism in the country

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Reacting to yesterday's bombing in Yobe state, Jonathan said the war against terrorism is a task for all Nigerians and not just the armed forces

In his official Facebook Page, he wrote "The death of any Nigerian at the hands of terrorists is a sad reminder that the war on terror is a task for all Nigerians not just the armed forces. I urge all Nigerians to continue to pray for peace in Nigeria and to support the administration of Buahri as the government does its best to bring an end to these acts of terror and secure all Nigerians. May God bless Nigeria"

And as the nation awaits the final verdict on the soldiers sentenced last year, the Chief of Army staff has hinted that the Nigerian Army would set up another court martial to try dissident soldiers soon, even as the war against Boko Haram has intensified despite the escalated guerilla tactics adopted by the terrorists.

State Police Public Relation Officer, Assistant Superintendent of Police, Sanusi Amiru, confirmed the attack but declined to give details of casualties, saying that a joint security taskforce comprising police and military have been deployed to the area to ensure peace return and culprits apprehended.

However, confirming the number of casualties to newsmen, Chairman of Birnin Magaji Local Government Council, Muhammad Bala Gusami, said he could only confirm the bodies of 31 people as at the time he spoke with reporters on phone (10 a.m. on Sunday). Gusami added that more bodies are being recovered from within and outside the community.

This happened barely 24 hours after the same group of gunmen killed six people from Kokiya and Cigama villages in Zamfara State at the weekend when the armed bandits attacked after the Friday congregation prayer, in Kokiya Central Mosque.

Meanwhile, Senate President Bukola Saraki and Speaker of the House of Representatives, Yakubu Dogara yesterday expressed concern over the resurgence of mass killings and bombing of churches and mosques by terrorists.

In a statement by his Special Adviser on Media, Yusuph Olaniyan, Saraki said: "My heart is with individuals and families who were directly or indirectly affected by this ungodly, sadistic and evil act.

"Sending Nigerians to untimely grave can never be the  to any religious, political or economic grievances.

"Besides, the Federal Government has demonstrated enough political will to engage any group in dialogue aimed at bringing these vicious and sad attacks to a final stop.

"The recent position of the Federal Government that it would not oppose negotiation with the insurgents 'if the Boko Haram terrorist group opt for it' ought to be seen as an olive branch extended to the sect by the present administration. And I urge them to take advantage of that", Saraki said.

On his part, Dogara through his Special Adviser on Media and Public Affairs, Turaki Adamu Hassan specifically condemned the Sunday's bomb attack in Potiskum, describing it as "barbaric, inhuman and wicked."

Yobe PPRO, Gbadeges narrated: "A young male suicide bomber at about 10 o'clock this morning (yesterday) detonated a bomb at Redeemed Church, Jigawa Area in Potiskum killing six persons including the suspect, who disguised as one of the worshippers.

A Red Cross official in Yobe State, Hassan Alhaji Muhammad, who visited the scene of the blast in the outskirts of Potiskum, said: "People were just going to the church when the bomber entered, otherwise the casualty figure would have been higher."

Barely 20 minutes when news of the blast spread, Christians in other churches in Potiskum, Damagum, Ngelzarma towns and other communities hurriedly concluded their Sunday services, fearing for insurgents' attack on other places of worship.

The weekend's attack in Zamfara State happened barely 24 hours after the same group of gunmen killed six people from Kokiya and Cigama villages in Zamfara State at the weekend.



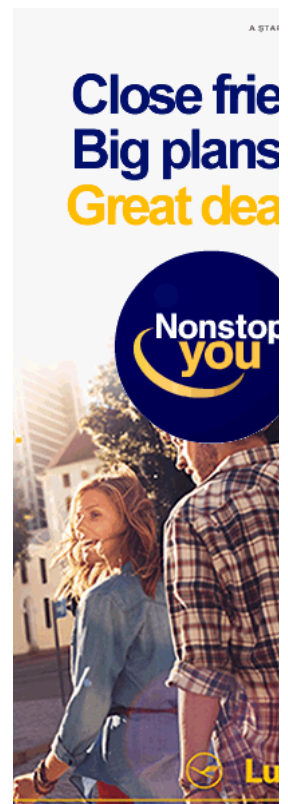
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On fresh court martial, Minimah said: "I must set up court-martial. If you are in my position and you did nothing, you are not worth being a Chief of Army Staff. I have no regrets. I am setting up more courts martial to try people who ran, showed cowardice, abandoned troops and equipment and ran away. Why are you in the army? Is that the army? That is not the army", he said.

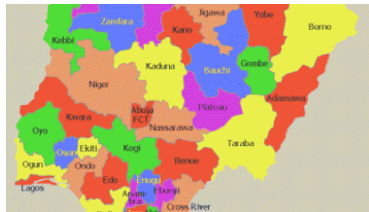


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