

Six Tegna pupils die in captivity

• Zulum meets Buhari over 'repentant' terrorists • Says whereabouts of 10% Borno indigenes unknown

From Terhomba Daka (Abuja),
Njadvara Musa (Maiduguri) and
Mohammed Yakubu (Minna)

SIX out of the 136 pupils of Tegna Islamiyya School have been reported dead in captivity.

Principal of the school, Abubakar Alhassan, said, yesterday, that the bandits had called to inform him about the deaths.

The Guardian gathered that they died of a strange disease.

Abubakar Adamu, whose seven children are in captivity, further confirmed this.

Despite the deaths, the bandits are still adamant in the N200 million ransom they demanded few weeks into the abduction of the children, as they told the principal that the demand must be met.

A reliable source revealed that the bereaved parents

had paid N50 million to the bandits, yet the criminals vowed to keep the children until the N200 million was completed.

"The parents have resigned to fate, because they are helpless, since the government has instructed them to shun the media in the process of rescuing their kidnapped children," the source said.

When contacted, the Chief Press Secretary (CPS) to Niger State Governor, Mary Berje, said she was unaware of the incident.

The CPS said she did not know from where reporters got the information.

Meanwhile, the newly deployed Commissioner of Police, Bala Kuryas, had assured that the students would soon be rescued.

IN another development, Governor Babagana

Zulum of Borno State has declared that the whereabouts of 10 per cent of his people remains unknown due to the insurgency in the state.

Speaking after meeting with President Muhammadu Buhari at the Presidential Villa, Abuja, Zulum also said that over 100,000 indigenes of the state had been killed in the 12 years of terrorism.

In the past few weeks, some terrorists have reportedly been surrendering to the military authorities.

Some of them carried placards asking for forgiveness, that they had turned a new leaf and vowed never to commit havoc against innocent, harmless, unarmed human beings.

About 3,116 of them (and their families) had trooped out of the forests to lay down their implements of destruction.

Of this figure, about 1,300 were said to have surrendered in Cameroon, while 1,816 surrendered to the Nigerian Army Theatre Command for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration prior to their amnesty.

Zulum told newsmen that he was in the State House to discuss sundry issues, including the mass surrender of terrorists, with Buhari, arguing that there was no reason to reject the peace offer by the bandits.

He added that the authorities were not oblivious of the negative effect of the programme, hence the involvement of the Federal Government in a large scale.

He said he was set to convene a high profile stakeholders' meeting to amicably resolve the issues following the surrender.

Gun duel claims six police officers in Plateau

Police confirm killing of police officers

From Isa Abdulsalami Ahovi (Jos) and Ibrahim Obansa (Lokoja)

SIX armed bandits and two police officers have died, as the criminals engaged the police in a gun duel at Mangu Local Council of Plateau State.

A witness told The Guardian that on Monday, August 23, some armed robbers blocked the road at Dertim in the same village and robbed many people. They reportedly left and returned by 7.00p.m.

The witness, a middle-aged man, was shot, but did not die.

"The man called the police that armed robbers were operating within the vicinity. The police came when the robbers were operating at Bimper community. The police surrounded the