

Fundamentalists Kill 10 Policemen In Kano

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• Soldiers Take Over Ado Ekiti High Court

Armed Muslim fundamentalists, suspected to be foreigners, struck Kano on Tuesday, killed

10 mobile policemen, and left several others severely wounded.

Policemen killed were

burnt. One was the second in command of Squadron 9 Kano Mopol. Another was a deputy superintendent of police.

The gunmen spoke Arabic and appeared unable to speak any Nigerian language. They could as well be Nigerians who

disguised as foreigners.

They have been terrorising the commercial city in the last two weeks. On Tuesday, they attacked the Pan-Shakara police station in the wee hours, and took away

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arms which they probably used in attacking the mobile police-men.

The latest attack by the same group brought to four the number of confrontations within two weeks, all aimed at security agents. It also brought to 21 the number of deaths recorded.

The assassins, who dressed in Islamic attire and chanted Islamic slogans, wounded three officers at the police station, including a woman, before breaking into the armoury.

After attacking the police station, the men, numbering about 20, hid in a dark ally in anticipation of police reinforcement. They opened fire as soon as they sighted a mobile police truck with officers.

A bullet hit the driver who slumped; resulting in the vehicle somersaulting several times. That made the task of the attackers easy. They walked over to the truck, opened fire and killed 10 policemen on the spot.

A gun duel took place in Pan-Shakara where policemen and soldiers confronted the fundamentalists who are becoming more daring by the day.

Two armoured vehicles have been stationed on the Pan-Shakara to Bayero University Road as part of measures to dislodge the dreaded group whose activities are likened to those of "The Taliban".

Police Public Relations Officer, Baba Mohammed, con-

firmed the incident but said he could not state the number of those killed.

Last Friday, gunmen attacked the Doroyi Jumat Mosque on Bayero University Road, killing a renowned Islamic scholar and critic, Mamoud Jaffa Adam, who was also the Chief Imam of the Mosque. Another worshiper was killed too.

Three others who received bullet wounds later died in hospital.

This is aside of a gun attack two weeks ago at the Kano Money Market in which two people died and over N21 million was stolen by the bandits.

The chief imam of Doroyi Jumat Mosque, a hardliner, was gunned down about 5 a.m. on a Friday while conducting prayers.

In all, five people were hit by bullets before the gunmen fled.

The chief imam had attended a seminar in Goron Dutse the previous day where he delivered a lecture on government and governance. He was scheduled to deliver another lecture on the day he was killed.

A vocal and controversial Islamic preacher, he had pulled out of the Hisbah Committee over disagreements with the government on issues concerning the Shariah Enforcement Agency.

On Tuesday last week, the Kano headquarters of the Federal Road Safety Commission

on Aria Road was attacked and four officials were murdered by assassins who made away with only their uniforms.

The next day, a police station in Sharada, an industrial area in the city, suffered the same fate. It lost two officers as well as assorted arms and ammunition.

Deputy Inspector General of Police (Operations), Adedayo Shehu Adeoye, confirmed to journalists in Kano that the crimes were perpetrated by Muslim fundamentalists.

Eight suspected members of the gang have been arrested and are helping with the investigations, he added.

Adeoye was in Kano to express the concern of Inspector General of Police (IG), Sunday Ehindero, on the development and promised that the police would get the killers.

He appealed to the public to assist the security agencies by providing information that will lead to the arrest of the culprits.

According to him, the attackers, numbering 15, were dressed in a manner that suggested they were Muslim fundamentalists as they chanted "Allah Akbah" (God is great).

"Our men saw them and their mode of dressing as they were trying to escape after they had attacked the FRSC

headquarters. When the second day, a similar incident happened, we were able to marry the two together to arrive at the conclusion that they are fundamentalists because from the description, it was the same attire they wore when they attacked the Sharada police station," Adeoye narrated.

He confirmed that arms and ammunition belonging to the police were stolen by the gang, but efforts are on to recover the weapons through those now in the police net.

"The police wish to warn that this state of affairs in Kano or anywhere can not and will not be tolerated. Decisive police and other security measures are being taken to arrest the escaping fundamentalists. Consequently, the inspector general has directed immediate increase in police patrol, stop and search and other security manoeuvres in Kano. This will continue until those fundamentalists who committed these heinous murders are arrested and brought to justice.

"Members of the general public are to bear with the attendant inconveniences. Any member of the public who has any information as to the authors of this crime should report to the nearest police station."

Down in the South West, there is also unease in Ado Ekiti. There, about 100 soldiers took over the premises of the High Court on Tuesday and sent out visitors and staff.

They said they were acting on the order from above.

Several people had thought it was to prevent Action Congress (AC) governorship candidate, Kayode Fayemi, from seeking redress in court over alleged injustice done to him in the elections last Saturday.

However, suspended Deputy Governor, Abiodun Olujimi, said the action was to prevent her from getting justice over her case.

She had gone to court to prove that the lawmakers did not follow the constitutional process in her impeachment, and to regain her mandate as either acting Governor or substantive Deputy Governor.

She said she was supposed to get a declaration in court on Tuesday that she was not impeached, so that she can carry on her political life.

She implored President Olusegun Obasanjo to intervene in the matter.

Olujimi, who was prevented by soldiers from entering the court premises, said she only came to the court for the interpretation of the Constitution as regards her removal from office.

She added: "I know that some people somewhere are trying to stall the case in court as the emergency rule in the state would end on April 19. If the Chief Justice has faulted the process of impeachment and it has been declared null and void, then justice must be done in my case. Justice delayed is justice denied..."