

TWO POLICEMEN, ONE CIVILIAN KILLED IN YOBE TERROR ATTACKS

Posted on Monday, November 5th, 2012



Photo : President Goodluck Jonathan

By Wisdom Patrick (Lagos), Chinwendu Nnadozie (Minna) and Baba Negedu (Kaduna)

Gunmen suspected to be members of the Boko Haram Islamic sect armed with explosives again on Sunday attacked a police station, a primary school and two telecoms towers in Fika, Damaturu, Yobe State, killing two policemen and one civilian.

Military sources and residents of the town confirmed the attacks.

"We heard that there were some attacks in Fika by suspected Boko Haram terrorists. They attacked two telecommunication masts, a police station and a primary school," military spokesman in Yobe State, Lazarus Eli, told *Daily Independent* in a telephone interview.

A resident said he had seen the bodies of two policemen being brought out of the razed police station, but Eli said he could not immediately confirm any casualty.

He said troops had been deployed to the town to contain the violence.

Fika is about 170 kilometres away from Damaturu, the Yobe State capital.

It is a hotbed of the Boko Haram group.

Residents said the gunmen attacked their targets with explosives around 4.30 am.

"They threw explosives and fired gunshots at their targets, setting them ablaze, and they fled after the attack," said Tanimu Mani.

"Soldiers who arrived in the town went inside the burnt police station and brought out the bodies of two policemen killed in the attack," he said.

Another resident, who is a student, Hassan Gaji, said he heard blasts and gunshots during the early morning prayers.

“They were shooting seriously for about one hour,” he said, adding that the town had been taken over by policemen and soldiers.

He said the attackers had entered Fika through the road leading from Potiskum to the north “and went straight to the police station, bombed it and then proceeded to the primary school in the town.”

Some towns in Yobe State, including Damaturu, Potiskum and Fika, have been hard hit by Boko Haram attacks in recent months, leaving hundreds of people dead and prompting a heavy army deployment.

Violence linked to the Boko Haram insurgency is believed to have left more than 2,800 people dead since 2009, including killings by the security forces responding to the terrorists’ activities, according to statistics by the United States of America (USA) based Human Rights Watch.

In a related development, Pioneer National Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Solomon Lar, spoke on the activities of Boko Haram at the weekend, warning the Federal Government not to dialogue with the sect until the leaders reveal their identity.

He also condemned the killing of retired Major General Mohammed Shuwa by suspected Boko Haram gunmen in Maiduguri at the weekend.

Lar, who addressed newsmen in Kaduna, called on the authorities to fish out killers of the late Army officer.

According to Lar, “The killing of retired Major General Mohammed Shuwa is an unfortunate incident. I read in the newspapers that he is one of many Nigerians who fought very seriously to keep the country together during the civil war.

“I am really disturbed. He is one of Nigeria’s unsung heroes. He was a hero, but nobody talked about him.

“Government after government never did anything to bring him up and recognise his past performance.

“I believe this is one of the most unfortunate incidents. General Mohammed Shuwa is still an unsung hero. Nobody sings his heroism.

“That is why I called him unsung hero. It is unfortunate. The authorities should do everything possible to find out those responsible,” he said.

On the state of insecurity in the country and plans to dialogue with the terrorist sect, Lar said: “I disagree completely that there should be dialogue with Boko Haram, unless they show their identity that Mr, X, Y and Z is the Boko Haram.

“For them to name some people that they want them to be their representatives, who are these people?

“They are faceless people, let them come out and say we are the Boko Haram, then, we will definitely do the dialogue.

“Even General Muhammadu Buhari, Ali Monguno they mentioned as their representatives, have not agreed with them. If their representatives have agreed with them, let them come out for dialogue.

“In the Niger Delta, when we had militant crisis, some people came out and said they were the leaders of the militants. That was very reasonable, and President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua, when he was alive dealt with these people.

“Why wouldn’t Boko Haram follow the same example?” he queried.

Reacting to insinuations that government has lost control of the nation’s security, Lar argued that the government of President Goodluck Jonathan was doing its best to secure Nigeria.

“President Goodluck Jonathan and the security chiefs under him are doing their very best, and I am sure the question of Boko Haram is a matter of days.

“If the Federal Government has lost control, it means Nigeria is a failing state, and Nigeria will never be a failing state, and the Peoples Democratic Party is doing well, but we should do more and see that we live in peace,” he added.

Northern States Governors Forum (NSGF) equally condemned indiscriminate killing of innocent Nigerians in the name of promoting religious ideology, describing last Friday’s killing of Shuwa as “very unfortunate.”

The forum applauded Federal Government’s acceptance of the offer to negotiate with the Boko Haram, expressing the hope that the initiatives will usher in peace, security and tranquility in the country.

Chairman of the NSGF and Niger State Governor, Mu’azu Babangida Aliyu, said the killing of Shuwa, a member of the defunct Supreme Military Council and one of the few surviving war veterans in Nigeria, is “one attack too many.”

Aliyu in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Danladi Ndayebo, appealed to terrorist groups across the country to stop their attacks on innocent citizens in the overall interest of the generality of Nigerians.

While expressing the forum’s deepest condolences to the families of late Shuwa as well as families of 40 other people reported to have been killed in a similar attack on Thursday night, Aliyu said no grievances can justify such dastardly acts against innocent people.

The NSGF welcomed Federal Government’s decision to accept the offer of negotiation with Boko Haram.

The initiative, according to the 19 northern state Governors, will usher in the peace and tranquility needed in the country “after years of unnecessary bloodletting” which has further crippled the economy of the region.

Meanwhile, Boko Haram yesterday said it was not responsible for the killing of Gen Shuwa. Shuwa was killed last Friday in his house at Gwange 1 Maiduguri by gunmen.

The Joint Task Force (JTF) said four gunmen suspected to be Boko Haram members appeared at his residence as guests and subsequently opened fire on him, adding, “One of the guests died on the spot

while the General died on the way to the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital.”

But in a telephone conference addressed yesterday in Maiduguri by Mohammed Ibn Abdulaziz, one of the sect’s commanders who has been speaking on its behalf in recent time, the *Jama’atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda’awati wal-Jihad* said it was not responsible for the killing even as he warned those putting the killing at the doorstep of the sect to desist from doing so. “We heard that people were saying that we had hand in the killing of Gen Shuwa. I want the people to know that we didn’t have any problem with the man. We don’t have anything against him. He is (was) a respected person and has not offended us in any way. We have no hand in his killing. We were even surprised when we heard about the incident. We want to warn those who are using our names to do this thing to stop and we also warn those who are also spreading the rumour that Jama’atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda’awati wal-Jihad killed Gen Shuwa to stop it because we are not the one that did it,” Abdulaziz insisted. He also exonerated the sect from the killing of a Maiduguri-based businessman, Alhaji Mohammed Flawama, an associate of the former Gov Ali Modu Sheriff, saying “we don’t know anything about it.”

Abdulaziz, who said he was the commander in charge of southern and northern Borno commands of the sect, also restated the resolve of the group to embrace dialogue with Gen Mohammadu Buhari, Shettima Ali Monguno, Senator Bukar Abba Ibrahim, Ambassador Gaji Gatimari and other prominent northern leaders “as witnesses.” He however asked the Federal Government to call the JTF to order and “stop killing our members.”

Tags: [slideshow](#)