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Boko Haram shoots dead 40 students in night attack

Posted by: Yusuf Alli and Duku Joel in Featured, News

16 hours ago

No fewer than 40 students were shot dead yesterday by men believed to be Boko Haram terrorists in an attack on a school hostel in Yobe State.

The students of College of Agriculture, Gujba, 40 kilometres from Damaturu the state capital, were asleep when the agents of death stole into their hostel. It was one of the most horrific attacks ever carried out on defenceless people by the insurgents.

The gunmen also set the school buildings on fire as they retreated after the attack.

The Nation gathered that the attackers numbering about 30 drove into the school around 1:30am and moved straight to the students hostel where they assembled them in various groups and opened fire on them.

"They arrived at the school around 1:00am.

We thought they were security personnel on surveillance, but they later invaded Admin Hostel and beat up the victims outside the hostel and opened fire on them," Ibrahim, a survivor, said.

An employee of the College, Musa Amadu, said the gunmen stormed the college in Toyota Hilux trucks, Volkswagen Golf cars and motorcycles, killing the students, after closing all the gates to prevent them from escaping.

He said about 18 students were abducted by the attackers. Others hid in the ceilings, Amadu said. He said the gunmen ordered the students not to flee before shooting them in the three-hour attack.

Governor Ibrahim Gaidam wept on seeing the bodies of the slain students with gun shot wounds on various parts of their bodies at mortuary. There was also a picture of the victims packed in a truck, their bodies drenched in blood.

Damaturu Specialist Hospital Medical Director Dr Garba Fika confirmed that 40 students were killed.

He told the governor who visited the hospital that five students, including three with fractures, one with bullet wound and another with abdominal injury, were at the hospital.

The governor, who was in tears, urged security operatives to intensify aerial surveillance of the area.

Gaidam added: "On our way from Maiduguri to Damaturu this afternoon (Sunday), we saw a trailer and bus that were burnt, with the occupants slaughtered and their corpses littering the highway.

"Government should rise up to its responsibilities to save the lives and properties of its citizens."

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The governor said that anyone travelling on the Damaturu to Maiduguri highway was taking a huge risk.

Deputy Governor Abubakar Aliyu, the Provost of the College, Mulima Mato and other dignitaries also shed tears at the mortuary when they saw the bodies of the students.

More than a thousand students fled the institution, military spokesman Capt. Lazarus Eli said.

Yesterday's attack was not the fist on a school in Yobe. Schools in the state re-opened only 13 days ago after 10 weeks of forced closure following attacks.

Those attacks resulted in the death of 29 pupils and three teachers.

In June, seven pupils and two teachers were killed at the Government Secondary School, Damaturu.

In July, 22 pupils and two teachers were killed at the Government Secondary School, Mamudo.

Parents were seen in groups discussing the fate of their children, in view of the serial attacks on schools by suspected Boko Haram militants who came disguised as soldiers, set up checkpoints and fired on motorists

A parent who requested anonymity told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) that he and others were scared of sending their children and wards to school.

"We are shocked, saddened and scared of sending our wards back to school with these ugly incidents of attack on schools in Damaturu, Mamudo and now, Gujba," he said

A statement by the state government said 40 students were killed while four injured had been transferred to Sani Abatcha Specialist Hospital in Damaturu.

Gaidam said although there was increase in troops movement and the deployment of more military hardware in the Northeast, the people of the state were yet to see the kind of action that could effectively nip criminal and terrorist activities in the bud.

He urged the people to pray for divine intervention.

The statement by the Special Adviser on Press Affairs and Information to the Governor, Abdullahi Bego, said: "His Excellency Governor Ibrahim Gaidam strongly condemns Saturday's attack on students of the State College of Agriculture, Gujba. The governor describes the attack as devastating, heinous and barbaric.

"Forty students were killed by criminals and terrorists while four others were injured during the attack.

"On a visit Sunday to the injured who were hospitalized at the Sani Abatcha Specialist Hospital Damaturu, Governor Gaidam commiserated with families of the victims and prayed Almighty Allah (SWT) to make the injured recover quickly.

"The governor also said the Yobe State Government will foot the bill for medical treatment for the injured.

"His Excellency Governor Gaidam calls on the military and other law enforcement operatives in the State to intensify surveillance and patrols to deal more effectively with the prevailing security challenges.

"The governor noted that although there is increase in troop movement and the deployment of more military hardware in the northeast, people were yet to see the kind of action on the ground that effectively nips criminal and terrorist activities in the bud.

"The governor pledged to continue to support security agencies in every way possible to restore peace and security.

"He also called for regular aerial reconnaissance and more intrusive patrols along the Maiduguri-Damaturu-Potiskum highway where many heinous attacks have taken place in the recent past.

"His Excellency Governor Gaidam also called on all residents of the state to continue to pray for divine intervention for the resolution of the security challenges that the state faces, remain calm, go about their normal businesses and cooperate and assist the security agents working to protect life and property.

"The governor urged residents to continue to use the telephone numbers provided by the military to report any suspicious persons or movement in their neighbourhoods."

No fewer than 143 people have been killed this month in neighboring Borno State, which along with Yobe and Adamawa states are under a state of emergency declared by President Goodluck Jonathan last May.

Many militants fled their bases in the Northeast, the insurgents' traditional stronghold, and violence initially fell, but revenge attacks quickly followed.

Boko Haram regards schools as a symbol of Western culture. The group's name translates to "Western education is forbidden".



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