

Army officer, seven soldiers die in Boko Haram ambush

• More outrage over killing of cleric, student

AN Army officer and six soldiers have been feared killed in a battle with Boko Haram fighters in Mainok, close to Maiduguri, the Borno State capital.

It was gathered from security sources that the incident which occurred at about 1pm on Tuesday, also left five soldiers wounded and two others missing.

One of the sources, however, said some of the terrorists were killed and many others injured.

According to the source, "two gun trucks and three anti-aircraft equipment could not be accounted for following the attack."

The source also confirmed that the bodies of the fallen soldiers had been recovered and the wounded moved to a medical facility for treatment.

When *The Nation* called the Director of Army Public Relations (DAPR), Col. Sagir Musa, to confirm the incident, he telephone rang out. He also did not respond to a text message sent to him at about 8.35pm yesterday.

Meanwhile, condemnations have continued to trail the killings of the Chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in Michika Local Government Area of Adamawa State, Rev. Lawan Andimi and a 22-year-old student of the University of Maiduguri (UniMaid), Borno State, Daciya Dalep, by Boko Haram insurgents.

The latest anger came yesterday from the Northern Governors Forum (NGF), an Islamic group, the Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC) and two House of Representatives members — Yusuf Gagdi and Bulus Maren.

Andimi was beheaded by the insurgents who rejected a N50 million ransom on Monday while Dalep was reported to have been executed by a teenage member of Boko Haram.

A video of the execution of Dalep, an indigene of Pankshin Local Government Area of Plateau State was released by the terror group on Tuesday.

While the Northern governors described the killing of Andimi as a "sad, disturbing and inhuman," MU-

From Okodili Ndidi, Abuja

RIC said it was "horrendous."

The Chairman of the forum and Governor of Plateau, Simon Lalong, made the condemnation through a statement yesterday by his Director of Press and Public Affairs, Makut Macham.

He commiserated with the family of the deceased, the church and people of Adamawa State over the loss and urged them not to allow the incident to affect their faith in God.

Lalong also appealed to them not to allow the loss to deter their love for humanity and create hatred among Nigerians, who were disgusted by the cruelty of the terrorist group.

The chairman said the forum remained united in supporting security agencies to put an end not only to terrorism, but all forms of criminality that threaten the unity of the country along ethnic, religious or political lines.

He stressed that the NGF was supporting President Muhammadu Buhari in his commitment as he rallies the world toward defeating terror groups, their sponsors and purveyors of their bizarre ideology, which propagate sorrow, hatred and pain on innocent persons in the name of religion and others claims.

Andimi, who was reportedly killed by the terrorist group on Monday, was also a pastor with the Church of the Brethren (EYN) at the District Church Council of Michika.

He was abducted by the insurgents two weeks ago following an attack on Michika town.

The director of the Islamic, Ishaq Akintola, said in a statement yesterday that anyone who kills innocent people does not represent Islam.

"We are at a loss for words. This killing is horrendous, ungodly and barbaric," he said in a terse statement.

Gagdi, a member representing Pankshin, Kanke and Kanam Federal Constituency, Plateau State in

the House of Representatives and Maren, who represents, Bokkos/Mangu Federal Constituency, described the incident as barbaric and inhuman.

Maren, in a statement yesterday in Jos, said the victim, said: "We received with deep shock, the brutal execution of a young and vibrant Plateau boy with a great future, Mr Ropvil Daciya Dalep, by Boko Haram terrorists."

"Dalep, 22, a student of Biology Education in the University of Maiduguri, was kidnapped on January 9. He was kidnapped along with 20 year-old Lilian Daniel Gyang, a 100 level student of Zoology, from UNIMAID, who hails from Foron District, B/Ladi Local Government, Plateau.

"One other hostage kidnapped along with these innocent children of Plateau State was released, leaving our Lilian and late Dalep in captivity."

The lawmaker said while they were still celebrating the release of Jennifer Ukambong and George Danbaba from Bokkos and Kanke respectively, they were hit by the murder of Dalep.

He added: "We received a shocking video from the insurgents of the execution of the student."

"This video of the killings of Dalep is condemnable, barbaric and inhuman. It represents high level of wickedness against humanity."

"My heart bled and tears ran down my cheeks when I saw the video clip of a teenage boy killing his fellow brother."

"It pains me more because in October 2019, we watched the execution video of our beloved brothers; Mr Lawrence Dacighir and Godfrey Shikagham, both carpenters from Mangu Local Government Area."

Maren called on the Federal Government and security agencies to rise up to their obligation to prevent loss of lives.

He demanded unconditional and quick release of Miss Gyang and Abdulhamid Bashir from Kanam, who were abducted in November

2019.

He commiserated with the family of late Dalep, the Mupun nation and Pankshin Local Government Area over the killing.

The lawmaker also commiserated with all those who lost their loved ones to such dastardly act, including the family of Andimi.

Gagdi, in a statement made available to News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Wednesday in Jos, described the execution of Dalep as "inhuman."

He said: "I condemn in the strongest terms, the gruesome execution of Daciya Dalep, a native of Jing in Pankshin and a Biology/Education student of UNIMAID by members of the Boko Haram."

"I am devastated by the excruciating loss of this promising young man, and more pathetically, in a gruesome manner one could not wish for his arch enemy."

"This has, once again, brought to fore the nightmarish experience of people living in the insurgency ravaged Northeastern part of Nigeria." The lawmaker called on the governments at all levels to redouble efforts at ending insurgency in the Northeast and other security threats in other parts of the country.

He called on Nigerians to render all the needed support to the security agencies in their quest to end insurgency in the country.

The lawmaker added: "This call for the need for government to redouble efforts to stamp out the irresponsible activities of this terrorist organisation."

"It is most despicable that despite the resources sunk in fighting the insurgency, the nefarious activities of the insurgents fester, and more precious lives continue to perish in a wanton manner."

"I want to strongly advocate for more logistics and moral support to the security operatives fighting insurgency anywhere in Nigeria," he advocated.

Gagdi called on the family of Dalep to take his death in good faith and accept the will of God.