

# Gunmen kill 44 in attacks

- 13 soldiers shot dead in Rivers, Borno, Ebonyi • Policemen gunned down in Imo, Kebbi
- Bodies of two abducted Greenfields varsity students found • Curfew in Anambra

THERE was more bloodletting yesterday with gunmen and bandits on a killing spree in different parts of the country.

There were tales of anguish in Rivers, Kebbi, Anambra, Kaduna, Borno, Ebonyi and Imo states.

No fewer than 44 persons, including soldiers and policeman, were confirmed killed in the attacks, some of which occurred on Sunday.

Five soldiers were killed in Rivers; six policemen

From Nwanosike Onu, Awka; Mike Odiegwu, Rosemary Nwisi, Port Harcourt; Abdulgafar Alabelewe, Kaduna; Khadijat Saidu, Birnin Kebbi; Damian Duruiheoma, Owerri and Gbenga Omokhunu, Abuja

were killed in Imo; a divisional police officer, seven policemen and two vigilantes were killed in Kebbi.

In Anambra, gunmen killed nine residents; bandits killed two more abducted Greenfield university students in Kaduna, while residents were shot dead in Imo and Rivers.

The Army confirmed the killing of an officer and five soldiers in Borno on Sunday.

## Five soldiers killed in fresh attacks

A day after soldiers, policemen and Customs officers were killed in attacks on checkpoints between Omagwa/Isiokpo/Elele Owerri Road in Rivers, gunmen struck again early yesterday, killing five soldiers in the state.

It was gathered that the

gunmen attacked the soldiers at the Omelema community in Abua, Odua Local Government Area.

It was while an emergency security meeting was going on at the Police Headquarters on the Moscow Road in Port Harcourt, the state capital.

A source said the victims were attached to an oil company operating in the area.

Four of the soldiers died on the spot; two others sustained injuries.

The spokesman of the Army 6 Division, Charles Ekeocha, did not pick his calls.

## DPO, eight others killed in Kebbi

A Divisional Police Officer (DPO) and eight policemen were killed in an attack by bandits in Dankolo, Sakaba, Makuku, Dokar Kambari and Kurmin Hodo villages, Sakaba Local Government Area in Kebbi State.

Sources said two operatives of the Yan-Sa-Kai vigilante group and an unspecified number of villagers were also

killed.

"The bandits also suffered heavy casualties from our men," a security source said.

A resident, Salisu Adamu, said: "The bandits carted away thousands of cattle from the villages and many food items. They came with more than 100 motorcycles, well-armed.

"They started shooting sporadically, which

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**BUHARI BATTLING DIFFICULT SITUATION, SAYS GBAJABIAMILA —P5**



# Soldiers, policemen among 44 killed in gunmen attacks

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prompted the village people to flee for safety in different directions."

The Kebbi State Police Command confirmed the killings.

Its spokesman, Nafi'u Abubakar, said: "DPO Sakaba, eight other policemen and two Yan-Sa-Kais lost their lives during a gun duel with the bandits."

**Six policemen killed in Imo**  
Gunmen at about 7 pm yesterday attacked the Okigwe South Police Area Command Headquarters in Oriagu, Ehime Mbano Local Government Area.

No fewer than six policemen, who attempted to repel the assailants, were feared killed.

The gunmen freed suspects in custody and carted weapons away.

A source said: "We started hearing gunshots around 7 pm. It was after about one hour that some of us emerged from the bushes to check what happened and counted about six bodies of policemen."

Police spokesperson, Orlando Ikeokwu, confirmed the attack.

"I can confirm an attack on Okigwe South Area Command headquarters in Ehime Mbano LGA, by yet to be identified gunmen.

"Five officers have been killed, while one is yet to be accounted for. The building is not razed, please," he said.

**Suspected bandits kill nine in Anambra**

Also yesterday, gunmen killed no fewer than nine persons suspected to be herders in Anambra State.

Chairman of Miyetti Allah in the Southeast, Alhaji Gidado Sidikki, who lives in Anambra, told our correspondent that 23 cows were also slaughtered.

The incident, according to him, happened at 2 am Monday at Modiyam Umaru camp in Awkuzu, Oyi Local Government Area.

The shooting scared students of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu

Ojukwu University, some of whom hurriedly left.

"I don't know what we've done to these people. Every day, they continue killing our people and their cows.

"In Ebonyi State, our people have been chased out of the place by the people and the remaining ones are still hanging without hope," Sidikki said.

Commissioner of Police Monday Kuryas deployed men to the community to douse tension.

The command's spokesman, Ikenga Tochukwu, said the assailants in their numbers were armed with machetes and other dangerous weapons.

"The attack resulted in the death of nine persons (whose identities are yet unknown), injuries on some others as well as the destruction of buildings and livestock," he said.

Governor Willie Obiano imposed a 7 pm to 6 am curfew on six communities, following the attack.

**Bandits kill two more varsity students**

Two more students kidnapped by bandits from the Greenfield University in Kaduna last Tuesday were killed yesterday.

Three of them were killed on Friday.

Kaduna State Commissioner for Internal Security and Home Affairs, Mr Samuel Aruwan, said their bodies had been deposited at a mortuary. He said: "On a sad note, security agencies have just reported to the Kaduna State Government the recovery of two more dead bodies of Greenfield University students, killed by armed bandits today (yesterday).

"The retrieved corpses have been evacuated to a mortuary, and the university has been notified of the development.

"The Government of Kaduna State under the leadership of Malam Nasir El-Rufai is saddened by this evil perpetrated against innocent students abducted while pursuing their education for a glorious future.

"The government sends its

deep empathy to their families and the university management and prays for the repose of their souls. The government will update the citizenry on further developments."

**Soldiers allegedly kill student**

There was tension in Owerri, the Imo State capital, following the alleged killing of a student of the Imo State University, Miss Divine Nwaneri, by soldiers.

The soldiers, it was learned, were guarding the Government House and the Correctional Centre.

Eyewitnesses said they shot at a vehicle conveying the student at about 11 pm on Sunday after it refused to stop at the roundabout for a check.

Nwaneri, a first-year student of Soil Science and Biotechnology in the Faculty of Agriculture who hails from Obollo in Isiala Mbano, was being driven to the Federal Medical Center (FMC), Owerri.

The vehicle, a Lexus, with a registration number Lagos KSF 407 GT, was still parked at the Government House as of the time of filing this report.

The soldiers were said to have flagged down the vehicle as it approached from Okigwe Road, torchlights flashing, but the driver was more concerned about the girl's deteriorating health condition.

An eyewitness said: "It was when the car approached the Government House roundabout trying to negotiate towards Orlu Road that the soldiers shot at the vehicle and instantly killing the woman at the back seat. The bullet pierced through the driver's right chin."

Police spokesman, Orlando Ikeokwu and Army Public Relations Officer of 34 artillery Brigade, Obinze, Capitan Babatunde Zubairu, said they were yet to be briefed.

**Commissioner shot**

Also in Imo, gunmen shot the Commissioner for Entrepreneurship Development and

Skills Acquisition, Chief Iyke Ume and four others during a Sunday night robbery along Owerri-Okigwe Road, Orji, Owerri North Council Area of the state.

The incident occurred at Orji, on Owerri-Okigwe Road, very close to the Orji Divisional Police Headquarters.

Ume was said to be driving an unmarked vehicle when the assailants double-crossed and shot at him before attacking other vehicles, including commercial buses.

Ume was riding with the Special Adviser to the Governor on Inter-Party Affairs, Dominic Uzowuru. Their phones were taken away.

Ikeokwu confirmed the incident.

**One killed in Rivers**

A resident, Uzoma Efule, was killed by a gunman in Ojike Street, Diobu, Port Harcourt, at about 10 am.

Police spokesman, Nnamdi Omoni, confirmed the incident.

An eyewitness said the victim visited a supermarket when the gunman appeared, shot him, and fled.

Diobu is a known battlefield for cultists.

Last Thursday, four corpses were found after a gun duel between the two gangs.

Omoni said security had been beefed up in the area to forestall further killings.

**Army confirms killing of six soldiers in Borno**

Director, Army Public Relations, Brig-Gen. Mohammed Yerima, yesterday confirmed the killing on Sunday of one officer and six soldiers during the operation to flush out terrorists in Mainok along Maiduguri-Damaturu highway in Borno State.

He said: "Regrettably, one gallant Officer and six soldiers paid the supreme sacrifice while five other soldiers sustained various degrees of injuries.

"The wounded soldiers have already been evacuated to the military medical facility for treatment.

Currently, troops are in full control of Mainok and environs as exploitation for fleeing terrorists is ongoing.

"The Chief of Army Staff, Lt Gen Ibrahim Attahiru, has applauded troops of Operation Lafiya Dole for their resilience, commitment and doggedness.

He further reassured Nigerians of the Army's unalloyed commitment to defeating Boko Haram/SWAP terrorists while urging citizens to always avail the troops with accurate and timely information for prompt action."

Borno State Governor Babagana Zulum condoled with the families of the slain soldiers.

In a statement by his spokesman, Malam Isa Gusau, he said: "Regardless of what happened in Mainok and how it happened as we collectively review the incident, we must first, and importantly, recognise that those soldiers who lost their lives at the weekend were fellow Nigerians; they were parents of children who are now orphans, husbands to wives who are now widows, and loved ones to families and friends now bereaved.

"They were soldiers of our armed forces who chose out of love for our country, to risk their lives in trying to keep us as safe and to protect the sovereignty of our country. We mourn these heroic soldiers and anyone caught at the unfortunate setback in Mainok.

"We salute these fallen soldiers for their immeasurable sacrifices and we pray for the repose of their souls. We mourn with the families of these soldiers; we share their grief, commiserate with them and commiserate with the Nigerian military."

Zulum said he was disturbed by the incident, especially given the fact that the insurgents have ceaselessly operated along Maiduguri-Damaturu road.

"Governor Zulum is assuring the people of Borno that the setback in Mainok will not deter the state government from its continued collaborative efforts

towards ending the insurgency.

"The governor calls on the military, other armed forces and volunteers at battlefronts to remain resolute while urging all stakeholders at the highest levels to continually approach equipping and supporting front line troops with the fear of God, bearing in mind that everyone will one day account for his or her doing or misdoing", the statement adds.

It was gathered that gunmen also killed two soldiers at a military checkpoint at the popular Timber shade T-junction in Afikpo North Council.

Timber shade market was desolate around 7 pm yesterday when the incident occurred as wood dealers, petty traders and transporters took to their heels.

**Ex-IG: police overstretched**

A former Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Ibrahim Idris, said the police were overstretched.

He called for improvement in mobilisation and welfare for officers and men of the force.

Idris told reporters in Abuja: "The issue is that the police are overstretched. They are operating at a very low level compared to the population of this country.

"If we can increase the population of the police to tackle the challenges we have in the country, that will assist a lot.

"We need to do something to increase the number of policemen, for them to adequately tackle the insecurity in the country. Let the government tackle adequately the requirements of the police."

To him, state police are not the answer to insecurity.

He advised that it would be more reasonable to address the issue of the inadequacy of the police.

He condemned the incessant attacks on Police stations.

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