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Massacre in Borno: B'Haram attacks wedding convoy, kills groom, 29 others

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Boko Haram members

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Gunmen suspected to be Boko Haram members have ambushed a convoy of vehicles conveying people returning from a wedding ceremony, killing scores of them, including the groom in Bulakuri village, Borno State.

The fate of the bride and her family members was unknown as of Sunday when Adamawa State Government Spokesman, Ahmad Sajoh, confirmed the incident to the *Associated Press*.

Although Sajoh said the wedding fatiha, the official Muslim ceremony, took place in Firgi village in Borno State, the *Agence*

France Presse reported that it held in Michika, Adamawa State.

The two news agencies however put the casualty figure at 30 but an Army spokesman, Captain Muhammed, said it was five.

"The report received from our troops indicated that some terrorists attacked a bus at Bulakuri village and killed five persons," Dole said in a statement on Sunday evening, adding that the bodies were taken to a mortuary in Bama.

According to some of the survivors, they were attacked along the Bama-Banki Road.

That road runs alongside a forest that is a known hideout of Boko Haram terrorists.

A driver, Kyari Buba, who told the *AFP* that he was in the middle of the convoy of about five vehicles when the gunmen struck, added that he saw more than 30 dead bodies on the side of the road.

He said, "I was in the middle of the convoy when the gunmen attacked and I was able to stop my vehicle on time to open the door and run into the bush along with the people I was with.

"When we returned long after the gunmen were gone, we met a gory scene with more than 30 people shot dead or slaughtered.

"All the victims were brutally murdered by the attackers."

Another survivor and friend of the groom, Japhet Haruna, recounted his escape from the assailants.

He said, "I wonder how I and few other people survived the onslaught because it was well-coordinated. I was in the fifth vehicle in the convoy and when I realised that the attackers were out to kill, I ran into the bush.

"I believe it is God that saved me and (a) few others from their bullets. They targeted everybody in the convoy - Muslims, Christians and children."



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Haruna said there were about 50 people in the convoy and that he suspected Boko Haram to have carried out the attack.

The AP also quoted a minibus taxi driver as saying, "We saw a lot of dead bodies killed by gunshots and some by the roadside that appeared to have been slaughtered" with their throats slit.

The driver, who asked to be identified only as Shaibu, told journalists in Maiduguri on Sunday, that his terrified passengers wanted him to turn back.

Saturday's ambush came just over a week after suspected Boko Haram fighters launched a coordinated assault on security forces in Damaturu, Yobe State.

Thirty-five bodies in military uniform were brought to a morgue following the October 24 attack.

Boko Haram leader, Abubakar Shekau, had in a new video claimed that he led the attack.

"Look at what happened in Damaturu," he said, adding that "since we killed them with our hands- in fact, I was the commander of the operation- you cannot say I'm making conjecture."

Figures released earlier this year said the Boko Haram conflict had cost more than 3,600 lives, including killings by the security forces.

Meanwhile, a pastor of the Christ Apostolic Church, Oregbeni in Benin, Edo State, Philip Afemikhe, was killed on Saturday by gunmen.

The hooded gunmen, who stormed the home of the popular local televangelist, first attacked a neighbour and her daughter whom they dispossessed of their mobile telephone handsets, before breaking into Afemikhe's room through the window.

They were said to have entered his bedroom where they shot him dead.

Some sympathisers said the gunmen might have been hired killers as they allegedly left the room without taking any valuable thing.

When contacted, the Edo State Police Public Relations Officer, Moses Eguavoen, said the police had not been officially briefed on the matter.

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