

Boko Haram killing old people in North — Report

CHUKWUDI AKASIKE,
GODWIN ISENYO
with agency report

ISLAMIC extremists suspected to be Boko Haram in the north-eastern part of Nigeria are now after elderly people, killing more than 50 of them last week.

A report by Associated Press said the development had instilled more fear in areas under the control of the sect.

Residents from five villages told AP that people too elderly to flee Gwoza Local Government Area of Borno State were being rounded up and taken to two schools where the militants opened fire on them.

The villages are about 130 kilometres (80 miles) south-east of Maiduguri, the state capital.

TERRORISM

A spokesman for civil defence groups in the area, Muhammed Gava, said, "What they are doing now is to assemble the aged people — both men and women — and then, they just open fire on some of them."

He added that more than 50 people had been killed at Government Day Secondary School in Gwoza.

A villager, who had fled, told the news agency that more elderly people are being gathered and shot at Uvagh Central Primary School. The villager spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of endangering his trapped parents.

Nigeria's military had on Friday said soldiers were patrolling the area "in search

of terrorists" and to verify the reported abductions Friday around Gumburi, where witnesses said the sect kidnapped at least 185 people a week ago.

In a related development, the Chief of Army Staff, Lt-Gen. Kenneth Minimah, has said terrorism was a global security threat which must come and go. He said the threat was not meant to stay in Nigeria.

The army chief said this in Kaduna on Friday at the graduation ceremony of 151 junior officers from Junior Course 78/2014 of the Armed Forces Command and Staff College, Jaji, Kaduna State.

Minimah noted that terrorism did not start in Nigeria, as many other countries of the world had to contend with the same

challenge in the past.

He urged the graduating officers to bring to bear their experience in rooting out the menace.

The COAS said: "You must have noticed that the global security environment of the 21st Century is becoming increasingly complex, with many national, regional and trans-national threats that undermine national and international security across the regions, sub-regions and the entire landscape of the world. And of course, Nigeria is not an exception."

"Today, we have terrorism on our soils. Many nations, including ours, have had to contend with asymmetric threats that are mostly intra-state in nature."

"Terrorism did not develop here, it only came here and we

pray it will also pass through here and go to some other place where it is going."

Minimah further urged the graduating students drawn from various services of the Nigeria armed forces to rise up to the occasion by ensuring that terrorism was a thing of the past in the country.

The COAS added: "You must brace up to these challenges with courage, conviction and in the most professional manner. Your ability to apply the skills learnt here is imperative now that our nation is confronting an array of internal security challenges."

Also speaking at the event, the Commandant of the AFCSC, Air Vice Marshal John Ifemeje, said the 21-week training and academic activities was designed to equip the officers with the appropriate skills to function as Grade 3 Staff Officers and Junior Commanders in their various services and in tri-service establishments.

Amongst the 151 graduands were 59 Nigerian Army officers, 45 Nigerian Navy officers, 28 Nigerian Air Force officers and 11 non-military officers from the Nigerian Defence Academy, the Defence Intelligence Agency, the Department of State Services and Federal Road Safety Commission.

Meanwhile, operatives of the Rivers State Police Command on Friday killed a suspected sea pirate during a gun duel between policemen and a gang of pirates.

The members of the gang, who operated in three speed boats, were said to have opened fire, on sighting a patrol team along Opobo Queen's Town Sea.

It was learnt that the gang had been terrorising traders within the coastal area in Opobo/Nkoro before the incident.

SUNDAY PUNCH gathered that the marine policemen responded swiftly and killed one of the sea pirates during the gun battle.

The state Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Ahmad Mohammad, confirmed the incident. He said some arms were recovered from some of the hoodlums, who fled as a result of the superior firepower of the marine policemen.

Mohammad explained that security operatives had raced to the sea after being informed about the activities of pirates within the area.

He listed some of the items recovered from the criminals as one General Purpose Machine Gun which belonged to a military formation, one G3 rifle, 85 rounds of live ammunition and five mobile phones.

Other items recovered from the sea pirates, according to Mohammad, were three speed boats and an undisclosed amount of money.



•L-R: Archbishop Samson Mustapha Benjamin; People's Democratic Party governorship candidate for Lagos State, Jimi Agbaje; Chairman, PDP, Lagos State, Capt. Tunji Shelle (ret'd.); and representative, Amuwo Odofin Federal Constituency, Mr. Oghene Egoh, at the PDP rally and stakeholders' forum in Lagos... on Saturday. Photo: Jimi Agbaje Campaign Team

Atiku will support Buhari — Ex-VP's aide

OLUSOLA FABIYI

FORMER Vice President, Atiku Abubakar, has promised to support the presidential candidate of the All Progressives Congress, Gen. Muhammadu Buhari (ret'd.).

To achieve this, Abubakar has told the former Head of State to be free in approaching him for any demand that he (Buhari) felt would facilitate his defeat of the Peoples Democratic Party's candidate, President Goodluck Jonathan.

Buhari had defeated Abubakar and other aspirants to clinch the presidential ticket of the opposition party.

After defeating his opponents, Buhari had visited Abubakar and he was also said to be preparing to visit other defeated aspirants.

Atiku's media aide, Garba Shehu, told our correspondent in Abuja on Friday that his boss had promised to do everything within his limit to make sure

POLITICS

that power changes hands at the federal level in 2015.

Shehu said, "Yes, the former Head of State met Turaki (Abubakar); they discussed many issues and both of them have agreed to work together in 2015."

He, however, did not explain if the support would also be monetary.

"The former Head of State asked for help in many areas and the former vice-president promised to be with him. He is going to take part in the campaigns and other rallies that will make Buhari win."

THE Speaker, Kwara State House of Assembly, Mr. Razak Atunwa, on Saturday said most of the states in Nigeria would suffer economic crunch from February 2015, if urgent preventive measures were not embarked upon.

He said although many oil producing countries suffer from the current fall in crude oil price, they had not been very much affected as Nigeria. He attributed this to their

States to face hard times from February — Kwara Speaker

SUCCESS NWOGU

ECONOMY

better management of their economies and their savings for the rainy day.

Interview with journalists in Ilorin, the Kwara State capital Atunwa called for better management of Nigeria's economy to rescue the country from total economic strangulation.

Atunwa said, "The Federal Government has not been prudent in the management of the resources and finances of Nigeria and, therefore,

within the past few months of the fall in the crude oil price, the economy is in trouble."

"Any prudent financial manager will know that you must save for the rainy day. Failure to do that will spell doom, which is precisely what we are now facing in Nigeria."

"The economy has been mismanaged; we have been pervaded by corruption and leakages. There have been malfeasances in office and all these contribute to the financial gloom, which we are about to face."