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Female bomber attacks Biu market, kills five

FEBRUARY 13, 2015 BY EVEREST AMAEFULE AND KAYODE IDOWU 31 COMMENTS

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A scene of Boko Haram attack.

credits: www.bbc.com

The main market in Biu, the largest town in the southern part of troubled Borno State, was attacked on Thursday with a bomb detonated by a female member of the terrorist group, Boko Haram.

The blast led to the death of five persons, including the female bomber who was believed to belong to the terror group that planted the bomb at the market.

The incident also left 10 other persons injured and caused panic in the town, which witnessed such an incidence for the first time.

According to one of the traders who claimed to have witnessed the incidence, Ibrahim Shaffa, the female suicide bomber was caught trying to set up the explosive device very close to the market at about 3.30pm on Thursday.

He said, "The youth and traders around the area, who are not aware of what the woman was trying to do only accosted her and told her to carry what she dropped. It was during the argument that the explosive device detonated and killed five persons, including the woman."

Shaffa added that 10 other persons were injured in the explosion, stressing that they had been taken to the Biu General Hospital for treatment.

He revealed that security agents visited the market almost immediately after the explosion to ascertain the level of destruction.

"They have restored normalcy to the area and the initially apprehensive traders have started going about their normal activities again," he said.

A medical doctor at the hospital, who spoke anonymously to one of our correspondents, confirmed that 10 persons were brought to the hospital with varying degrees of injury.

He said, "I cannot however confirm the number of those that died in the incidence as they were not brought here, but I learnt that they were five, including the woman who was trying to plant the bomb."

Attempts to get the Public Relations Officer of police in the state, Gideon Jibrin to comment on the blast, were unsuccessful as calls put through to his mobile telephone did not go through.

Meanwhile, the Nigerian Army on Thursday said that its soldiers had killed 260 Boko Haram fighters between February 6 and February 13.

The spokesperson for the Nigerian Military, Col. Moustapha Ledru, who disclosed this on Thursday, added that troops also arrested some fighters of the sect and seized some of their weapons. He did not give details of

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how many of the fighters were arrested and the quantum of weapons seized.

Niger had launched attacks on Boko Haram after the sect's fighters attacked some villages in the Diffa region of the country late last month.

Ledru was quoted by some online publications to have said that the cross-border attacks would continue until the Boko Haram fighters were defeated. He urged Nigeriens living in border towns with Nigeria not to panic, adding that the military had taken steps to establish peace and secure the people.

In a related development, the Federal Government on Thursday raised the alarm that the Boko Haram sect may have started recruiting and training new recruits.

The Coordinator of the National Information Centre on the War against Terrorism, Mr. Mike Omeri, raised the alarm at a press briefing in Abuja, citing intelligence reports.

Omeri said, "In the general effort to contain acts of insurgency in the North-East and secure the entire area for the forthcoming general elections, the centre wishes to alert the general public on very recent intelligence reports which indicate a considerable movement of Boko Haram recruits from such locations as Geidam, Mairi and Dupcha (all in Borno State) to training camps within the general area.

"Previous major attacks by insurgents, including the siege to Bama and Monguno military bases, were preceded by such massing up of fighters in training camps within the proposed targets.

"This recent development which points to the same direction has also been alluded to by the Boko Haram group in its recent boast about having a 30,000 to 50,000-strong force to disrupt elections in Maiduguri."

Omeri, however, assured that the Nigerian military forces had fully mobilised and deployed against the insurgents whom he claimed were being chased and roundly subdued.

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