

B'Haram terrorists burn Borno town, kill army lieutenant

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Army Public Relations, Brig.-Gen. Sani Usman

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Over 300 Boko Haram terrorists have invaded and burnt down houses, military facilities and a police station in Magumeri town, Magumeri Local Government Area of Borno State, on Wednesday.

One of our correspondents learnt that the terrorists thereafter laid an ambush for a military convoy going to Gubio area in Monguno and killed a lieutenant, Chris Oguntoye.

The Director, Army Public Relations, Brig.-Gen. Sani Usman, in a statement on Thursday blamed the Magumeri attack on alleged non-cooperation of the residents, saying they shielded the terrorists from the troops.

He said, “Suspected Boko Haram terrorists attempted to unleash mayhem on Magumeri town on Wednesday evening but the timely intervention of the military thwarted the attack.

“While troops are still consolidating and mopping up, it is imperative to state that preliminary investigation shows that the attackers of Magumeri came from the same community. The terrorists that attacked the village are well known to the people.

“It should also be noted that the village was never attacked throughout the period of the insurgency for some inexplicable reasons. The terrorists and their collaborators hibernating in the area were never exposed. There seems to be an unholy alliance between the terrorists and the villagers.”

It was gathered that the deceased Lieutenant Oguntoye was a member of the 60 Regular Course cadets of the Nigerian Defence Academy and was briefly an aide-de-camp to a former President of Guinea-Bissau.

A member of a vigilance group, who spoke on condition of anonymity to one of our correspondents, said the terrorists took the soldiers guarding the town by surprise.

He said the soldiers had to retreat after an initial exchange of gunfire just as the insurgents took advantage to loot and burn down buildings in the town.

The attack occurred at about 5:30pm on Wednesday.

The source said, “They (insurgents) came in at least six Toyota Hilux vehicles, 10 motorcycles and some on foot.

“They were over 300. As soon as they came into the town, they began shooting and the soldiers countered but were overpowered by the strength of the terrorists just as some of the soldiers fled.

“This gave the insurgents the opportunity to loot and burn the barracks to ashes as well as the police station.”

He added that the casualty figure was still unknown.

He, however, said that the military reinforced from Gubio and Maiduguri and pursued the marauding insurgents from the town.

Also confirming the attack, the Public Relations Office of the Borno State Police Command, Victor Isuku, a deputy superintendent of police, revealed in a statement that one of the police officers deployed to quell the attack was killed and another shot in the leg by the insurgents.

Isuku, in the statement said, “Yesterday evening, information was received that Magumeri town was under attack by Boko Haram terrorists.

“On receipt of the report, teams of FSARS and EOD personnel were quickly mobilised to the scene. A mobile police Sgt. Haliru Aliyu deployed with the military in Magumeri on special duty was killed while one Sgt. Lawrence Ayeni sustained gunshot injury in his leg and is currently at the military hospital receiving treatment.”