

# Tax-seeking insurgents kill 40 in Yobe attacks

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Gunmen

By Uthman Abubakar

Suspected Boko Haram insurgents have killed about 40 people at Gurokayeya village of the Gaidam Local Government Area of Yobe State.

While 20 people were killed on Monday by the gunmen, the other 20 were killed on Tuesday by an explosive device suspected to have been planted by the insurgents.

Residents linked the killings to the inability of the farmers in the community to pay taxes to the insurgents on their harvest.

“The insurgents stormed the village between 5 pm and 6 pm, called out the residents, gathered them at the outskirts and opened fire on them,” a native told our correspondent on the phone on Wednesday.

“Over 17 people died on the spot on Monday. The other about 20 were among those who drove from Gaidam and neighbouring villages to the affected village for the burial of the first 20, on Tuesday.

“When they were driving back home their vehicle drove over an explosive planted by the insurgents; 10 died on the spot and about 10 died at the Gaidam Primary Health Care Centre where they were rushed to after the accident.”

The Yobe State Police Command spokesman, Dungus Abdulkarim, confirmed the two incidents.

“The gunmen (he would not call them insurgents until the conclusion of investigations) stormed Gurokayaye village at about 11pm on Monday, October 30 and opened fire, which resulted in the killing of the Village Head and between 17 and 20 others,” Abdulkarim said.

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“Two of those who sustained severe injuries are now receiving treatment at the Gaidam PHC and two others now at the Yobe State University Teaching Hospital, Damaturu.

“At about 7.30 pm of Tuesday, October 31, the people, who had converged on the village for the burial of those killed, drove over a landmine, and 20 people died as a result,” the Yobe police spokesman said.

He described the village as a stronghold of Boko Haram insurgents, disclosing that troops had even tagged the area as a ‘no-go area.’

Abdulkarim gave The PUNCH a background to the incidents, remarking that they were reprisal attacks by the suspected insurgents.

“You know, this is harvest time, and the insurgents are used to going around the farming communities, collecting Jizya (farm produce tax). Recently they stormed Tarmuwa axis of the state in this tax collection round.

“Following information revealed by the locals, security agents stormed the locality and engaged the unsuspecting insurgents in a serious gunfire exchange, as a result of which two of the gunmen were killed and four were arrested, as many escaped with gun wounds.

“So, in reprisal, the gunmen descended on Gurokayaye village of Gaidam LGA where they killed the people I have just told you.”