

Boko Haram attacks secretariat in Maiduguri, 3 dead

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...6 Adamawa IDPs campus shut down

From Molly Kilete, Abuja Timothy Olanrewaju, Maiduguri and Oladele Oguntimehin

A male suicide bomber detonated explosive devices at the gate of Borno State Secretariat yesterday and killed three people.

Witnesses said he was disguised as a lunatic.

It also emerged that three policemen stationed at the entrance of the secretariat, also known as Musa Usman Secretariat died in the attack.

The suicide bomber was said to have insisted on entering the complex located at the heart of Maiduguri city yesterday on the false claim of going for a verification exercise in the complex.

Acting Director of Army/Public Relations, Col. Sani Usman and Chairman of the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), Ahmed Satomi confirmed the attack.

Acting General Commanding Officer (GOC), 7 Division Nigerian Army, Maiduguri, Brig. Gen. Victor Ezugwu urged residents to be more vigilant even as he assured that the military and other security agencies would do everything possible to halt terror attack in the state. Usman said 18 people sustained injuries, while three were "declared dead. Unfortunately, in the process of stopping him, he detonated the Improvised Explosive Device (IED) on his body, instantly killing himself, a policeman and critically injuring another policeman who stopped him from gaining entry into the Secretariat Complex.

Meanwhile, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) said it has closed down six Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps in Adamawa, following the return of inmates to their homes.

Mr Sa'ad Bello, NEMA coordinator in the state, told newsmen in Yola that more than 95 percent of the 90,000 IDPs in the ten camps operated by the agency, had returned home.

He listed the camps which were closed down to include those located in Bekaji, Kwanan Waya, Girei 1 and 2, Yola campus of Federal Polytechnic Mubi, and EYN Church.

Bello explained that the IDPs decided to return to their various towns and villages after the enormous successes recorded by the military in reclaiming and restoring peace to areas under Boko Haram insurgents.

"Following the enormous victory recorded by Nigerian Army in defeating Boko Haram and reclaiming all captured areas in Adamawa, the camps began decreasing. Almost 95 per cent of the Internally Displaced Persons living in ten designated camps in the state have returned to their respective villages and towns and the agency found it necessary to close down six out of the ten camps in the state," he said

Bello disclosed that the remaining four camps are now sheltering less than ten thousand IDPs and the latest population data matrix analysis showed that there were still about 100,000 IDPs living within communities in the state.

Bello said the agency was now focusing its attention in preparing those returning home, to pick up the pieces of their lives and make the best of the situation they find themselves.

"Managing the returnees back to their communities is the biggest challenge now facing the agency due to low resources. The dwindling economy in the country is directly hampering our activities to a large extent," the coordinator said.