

Again gunmen ambush soldiers in Niger, kill 2, injure 18 others

From **John Adams,**
Minna

ARMED men yesterday ambushed soldiers and killed two and injured several others during a rescue mission in Madaka community in Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State.

About 13 of the soldiers who sustained bullets injuries are being treated at government facilities in Minna, the state capital, while those said to be critically injured have been taken to Kaduna for serious medical attention.

The soldiers who were among those stationed at Kagara, the headquarters of Rafi LGA of the state, were ambushed when they went to rescue 28 members of the community who were earlier abducted.

One of the injured soldiers, Major D. Omale told the state governor, Alhaji Abubakar Sani Bello who visited them in hospital that the bandits numbered about 200, riding on motorcycles. They ambushed them on top of a hill from where they engaged them (soldiers) in gun battle.

Two of the soldiers were killed while about 18 sustained various degrees of gun-short injuries. The gunmen, according to him, suffered major casualties but were able to evacuate all

their dead, squishing them on their motorcycles.

Major Omale told the governor from his hospital bed that the gunmen were all dressed in the same military uniform like them (soldiers), suggesting that they are not kidnappers.

He said the battle field was in Madaka, Kukoki and Kaore, all in Shiroro LGA where the chairman of the council, Mallam Suleiman Chukwuba confirmed that Boko Haram insurgents had taken over, and were now forcefully recruiting youths

in the areas to join them.

Speaking after receiving first-hand information from the injured soldiers, the governor while condemning the attack on the soldiers, vowed that the fight against the gunmen terrorising the state must continue.

He, however, said that the soldiers should change their tactics in confronting the criminals making lives meaningless to the people of the state, and assured them of the state government's support in other to secure the state.

This latest attack on the soldiers came barely five months after gunmen, numbering about 100 attacked military camps in Allawa and Bassa in the same Shiroro LGA, killing five soldiers and a mobile policeman.

The gunmen also reportedly set a military base in Allawa town on fire and burnt down their operational vehicles, forcing the military to shutdown the camps that were reopened a month later after a series of meetings with the state government.

...As B'Haram takes 8 LG wards, recruit youths

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WITH barely six months after Niger state governor, Alhaji Abubakar Sani Bello confirmed that the dreaded Boko Haram insurgency has hoisted its flag in Kaore community in Shiroro local government area of the state, insurgents have began membership recruitment in the state.

Youths from about 500 communities in Shiroro Local government area currently under siege as the insurgents are forcefully recruiting them into Islamic sect.

The Chairman of Shiroro Local Government, Mallam Suleiman Chukuba who

disclosed this to newsmen in Minna, said that youths in the affected communities are being asked to join them or be killed, adding that "this is what is currently going in my local communities.

"As the Chairman of Shiroro local government area of Niger state, I can tell you that Shiroro is not only dealing with the issue of banditry, Shiroro has a lot of Boko Haram members, I have proof of this as the chairman of the Council.

"They (Boko Haram) have overtaken the local government area and are trying to equip the people to fight against the government. The preaching of the Boko Haram members are against the government and they have been

asking the residents to be part of what they are doing".

Mallam Chukwuba said that eight out of the 15 wards in the local government, comprising about 500 communities are being ruled by both Boko Haram and bandits, pointing out that the affected wards include Manta, Gurmana, Bassa-Kokki, Allawa, Kurebe, Kushaka, Kwati, Chukumba and Galadima Kogo."

The chairman, therefore, appealed to the Federal Government to come to aid of the people by bring in more security personnel to help them flush out and dislodge the insurgents who had already made Shiroro Local Government Area their home