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8 Killed in Gombe church • Friday: 7 Injured in Sapele mosque attack; 20 killed and Church bombed in Adamawa

From PAUL ORUDE, Bauchi

Friday, January 6, 2012

No fewer than eight people have been shot dead, while several others received gunshot wounds, following an attack on Deeper Life Bible Church, Bogo District of Nassarawu, in Gombe, by suspected members of Boko Haram Islamic sect Thursday night. Following the attack, fear has gripped Christians in the state.

The Group Coordinator of Deeper Life Bible Church, Pastor Bismark Binue, said the worshippers were observing 'Miracle Service' when the gunmen struck at about 7pm.

He said: "It is shocking and embarrassing. As an indigene of Gombe, I did know Gombe to be peaceful."

Miracle George, 18, whose parents were shot when the gunmen attacked the church, said it was a miracle she escaped alive.

According to her, "I was praying when I suddenly heard gunshots. I saw a man wearing thick black sweater by the window shooting.

"I don't know how many they are. There was blood everywhere. He was just shooting."

It was gathered that the left wrist of Miracle's father, Mr. George Onyemachi, was cut off by bullet while her mother, Favour, was shot in the shoulder. They are among over 22 others rushed to the Federal Medical Centre and the Specialist Hospital, Gombe after the shooting.

Also injured is 10-year-old Magdalene Esemi, who was shot in the abdomen. Her father, Esemi Markson, a mechanic, said he was in his house, close to the church, when he heard gun shots.

"My son, Precious, who was with me, said, 'Daddy I thought they have banned knock-out.' We were wondering what it was all about when we heard more sounds.

"Not quite long, my two daughters, Ruth and Grace, ran home shouting that there was shooting in the church and they did not see Magdalene."

He said Magdalene was shot as she was looking for her elder sisters, adding: "She is at the FMC and her condition is improving."

He appealed to President Goodluck Jonathan to bring vehicles to evacuate southerners from the North over Boko Haram's threat.

"I want to call on the president to do something before the situation gets worst.

We should leave in peace rather than in crisis," he said

Among the eight worshippers killed was the choir master's wife, Mrs. Chima, Godwin Odoh, 37 and Sule, a printer.

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Governor Ibrahim Dankwambo visited the victims at the FMC and Specialist Hospital earlier yesterday.

The government, in statement after the visit, condemned the attack. He sympathised with families of the victims and pledged to foot the medical bill of those injured as well as pick the burial expenses of those killed.

The feeling among Christians, following the attack on Deeper Life Bible Church in Gombe is that Boko Haram is making good its threat that southern Christians should leave the North or be killed.

Virtually all shops and business outlets belonging to Christians, especially those from Southern Nigeria were locked yesterday when our correspondent went round some parts of the city.

"How do Christians continue to live like this in their own country? I want to call on President Jonathan to do something urgently about the situation. Let the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigerian (PFN) take decisions for all Christians. What has happened is unexplainable. What is the justification for attacking a small church and killing almost everybody? The blood of the innocent is upon the killers," Pastor Binue said.

7 injured in Sapele mosque attack

From EMMA OGOIGBE, Warri

No fewer than seven persons were seriously injured yesterday when a group of Christians attacked a mosque in Sapele, Delta State.

Saturday Sun gathered that the youths, who were armed with dangerous weapons, stormed the mosque at about 6am and unleashed terror on the people that were around.

It was learnt that the youths, after the attack, asked the Muslims in Sapele to pack out of the area and return to the North.

Speaking to newsmen on the attack, Mallam Sadiq Musa said some of the victims have been taken to the hospital for treatment.

According to him, "it is a pity that our brothers are attacking us. If they ask us to leave, where do they want us to go? We have no other place to go.

"This issue is political and not a religious matter because we are trying to preach peace and we don't believe in violence."

According to him, other Muslims, who are non-indigenes are now living in fear following the daily attack and threat to their lives. He pleaded with Governor Emmanuel Uduaghan and all security chiefs to beef up security in every part of the state.

Musa disclosed that the state director of the State Security Service (SSS) and the Police Area Commander in Warri have both waded into the matter to ensure there is peace in the area.

Also speaking, Alhaji Adbulsalam Paxman Ekpuzie, described the attacks as unbecoming and pleaded for Governor Uduaghan's intervention.

"Something urgent should be done to halt the incessant attacks on the Sapele mosque. Nobody should make deliberate effort to destabilise this peaceful state and the nation," said Ekpuzie, who is the National Chairman, Muslim Movement for Peace and Justice of Nigeria.

20 killed in Adamawa Friday • Church bombed

From DAVID MOLOMO, Yola

The serene town of Mubi, the commercial nerve centre of Adamawa State, experienced a bloodbath yesterday as gunmen killed 20 people, including a manager of one of the new generation banks and his driver. Deeper Life Bible Church was also bombed without casualties.

Of the 20 victims, four persons were shot dead on the spot, Thursday night, at Goodwill Hotel in Mubi by gunmen who rode on motor bikes. One out of the three others, who were wounded in the attack, died yesterday morning. In another attack, 16 people were killed.

Although effort made by Saturday Sun to confirm the degree of the incident and casualties from the Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Altineh Daniel, proved abortive, police sources disclosed of those killed were from the southern part of the country. Following the attack, non-indigenes have started relocating from the town. To ensure security in the city, soldiers have been deployed to the streets.

Emir of Mubi, Alhaji Isah Ahmadu, has appealed to the security operatives to intensify efforts to

safeguard life and property of residents. He also commended security operatives for the effort so far made to beef up security in the area

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