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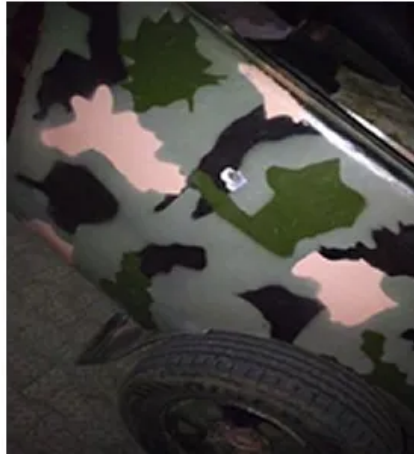
FEATURES

32 killed, 35 injured in Nigeria-Cameroon border bomb attack

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January 8, 2020 Correspondents



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Ahmed Miringa and Emmanuel Onani

▪ Boko Haram ambushes Op Lafiya Dole's commander

At least 32 people, including soldiers were killed when an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) suspected to have been planted by Boko Haram members exploded at a Nigeria-Cameroon border town, Gamboru Ngala on Monday.

Also, more than 35 others were injured in the explosion.

This was as armed men believed to be members of Boko Haram on Monday ambushed and attacked the convoy of the Theatre Commander of Operation Lafiya Dole, Maj.-Gen. Olusegun Adeniji, at Jakana, Borno State.

A security source said the Gamboru Ngala explosion occurred in a market.

"It happened about 4p.m. at the local market in Gamboru Ngala, on a crowded bridge of Gamboru and Fotokol border towns. The towns are between Nigeria and the neighbouring Cameroon," the source said.

A witness, Ahmad Musa, disclosed that dozens of people were injured in the attack.

He said: "I heard a loud sound of explosion and before I knew what was going on, dead bodies were already on the ground, many of them children. They were crying for help. It was pathetic.

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"The incident, which happened on the Fotokol Bridge between Nigeria and Cameroon, about 4p.m., resulted in the death of many people. I personally counted 32 corpses on the ground, including bodies of Nigerian soldiers."

Another resident, Mohammad Ali, described the attack as unfortunate.

He said: "Many were severely injured; mostly children and women. We took 35 persons to the hospital, but so many were injured. It was an unfortunate day and we were saddened about the attack. As you know, a lot of people used to move to and fro on the bridge."

Meanwhile, the Theatre Commander, Adeniyi, was returning from operational visit to troops' location when his convoy came under attacks.

The insurgents had deployed anti-aircraft (AA) guns, rocket-propelled grenades, as well as machine guns during the ambush on the theatre commander, his deputy, Maj.-Gen. M. G. Ali, Brig.-Gen. E. I. Eze, Brig.-Gen. S. I. Igbinomwanya, and Lt. A. A. Tejuoso.

The ambush came amid claims by the military of winning the war against terrorism in the North-East, perpetrated by Boko Haram and the Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP).

It also came barely two weeks after a daring attempt was made by the fighters to invade Damaturu, the capital of Yobe State.

The Nigerian Army Operations Media Coordinator, Col. Aminu Iliyasu, said in a statement yesterday that Adeniyi and others were returning to Maiduguri, the Borno State capital, when the incident occurred about two kilometres to Auno in Kaga Local Government Area of Borno State.

Iliyasu said the attack was repelled, as the commander led troops in his convoy to engage the terrorists with superior firepower, thereby forcing them to flee in different directions.

He, however, regretted that two soldiers were wounded during the fierce encounter, even as several of the terrorists were killed.

The media coordinator said the ambush might be "reprisal" over the recent killing of the sect's commanders in intensified air and surface operations.

Iliyasu said: "In a clear display of misguided desperation to stage a reprisal following the recent neutralisation of several of their top commanders by troops of Operation Lafiya Dole, on 6 January 2020, some marauding elements of the criminal Boko Haram insurgents laid and eventually sprung an ambush against the convoy of the Theatre Commander, Operation Lafiya Dole, Major General Olusegun Adeniyi.

"The theatre commander's convoy came under the criminals' ineffective and uncoordinated fire from anti-aircraft guns, machines guns, rocket propelled grenades and some of their foot soldiers about two kilometres to Auno in Kaga Local Government Area of Borno State while returning from Jakana where he visited troops' location following his earlier meeting with the Governor of Borno State, Prof. Babagana Umara Zulum, at Auno.

"In a commendable demonstration of bold action in battle, the theatre commander led the gallant troops of his convoy to engage the criminal Boko Haram insurgents with superior fire power, subduing them and thereafter assaulting the ambush site with his men thereby causing the criminal insurgents to flee the location in disarray.

"Other senior military officers in the theatre commanders' convoy at the time of the ambush include the Deputy Theatre Commander, Maj.-Gen. M. G. Ali, Brig.-Gen. E. I. Eze,



Brig.-Gen. S. I. Igbinomwanya and Lt. A. A. Tejuoso. In the aftermath of the encounter, several Boko Haram criminal insurgents were decimated.

“Regrettably, two soldiers were wounded in action during the encounter. The wounded soldiers are currently receiving treatment at a military medical facility and are responding positively to treatment.”

Iliyasu disclosed that 20 rounds of 7.62mm special ammunition, two rounds of 7.62mm NATO ammunition, one camouflage trousers, one Nigeria Police Force fragmental jacket, two AK47 rifles and three AK47 rifle magazines were captured from the fleeing insurgents.

He added that the theatre commander and his convoy continued their trip and had since returned safely to the headquarters in Maiduguri.

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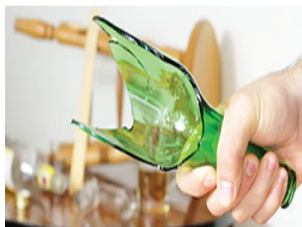
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