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Nigeria: Boko Haram Kills 7 in Borno

BY MICHAEL OLUGBODE, 13 FEBRUARY 2012

Gunmen suspected to be members of Boko Haram had laid siege on historic town of Old Maiduguri, neighbouring town to Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, killing seven people between February 12 and Sunday morning.

The killings in old Maiduguri within Jere local government area of the state was followed by a deafening bomb blast and subsequent exchange of gunfire between members of the dreaded Islamic sect and soldiers around the popular Gamboru market within the Maiduguri metropolis.

It was gathered that the gunmen crept into old Maiduguri at about 9p.m. on Saturday and killed a Chadian, whose name remained a mystery as at the time of filing this report alongside with his wife.

The killer equally slaughtered another man, a Shuwa Arab, in the same neighbourhood just moments after the killing of the Chadian couple.

Just when the neighbourhood thought the last had been seen of the killers and they had gone to bed, they were visited again as they sent an Islamic scholar and three of his students to an early grave.

Eyewitnesses said the killers were in the neighbourhood at about 12midnight Saturday when the popular Islamic scholar and three of his teenage students were killed.

In the incident at the Gamboru market area, it was gathered that there was a deafening bomb blast at about 1am yesterday. The explosion was visited by sporadic exchange of gunfire between the sect members and the soldiers attached to the Joint Task Force (JTF).

The residents of the area could not however disclosed the number of casualty, one of them insisted that those killed were evacuated before break of day.

Some of them who spoke anonymously to THISDAY said they got to known that the corpses were taken to the morgue of the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital (UMTH).

A source at the hospital who revealed that corpses were deposited by soldiers early morning Sunday, however, could not state the number of corpses deposited.

When confirmation was source from the spokesman of the JTF, Lt. Col Hassan Mohammed on the killings he advised that the police should be approached for information on the issue.

But on the bomb blast at the Gamboru market area, he said "no news like that has come to my knowledge so I cannot confirm anything."

When the Borno State Police Commissioner, Simeon Midenda was called on his phone for confirmation by journalists, he said he was away in Abuja on official duty and advised that the Police Public Relations Officer, Samuel Tizhe, who was on ground should be approached for information.

But an attempt to get him proved abortive as his mobile was switched off when call was placed on it last night.

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