

# 30 Killed, 35 Injured in Fresh Bomb Attack on Borno Bridge

January 8, 2020 5:05 am



Borno State Governor, Prof. Babagana Umara

- Gov rejects plan to evacuate two villages on highway
- Army confirms attack on Operation Lafiya Dole commander

Kingsley Nwezeh in Abuja and Michael Olugbode in Maiduguri

No fewer than 30 people were reportedly killed and 35 others injured in the bombing of a pedestrian bridge at the market town of Gamboru, Borno State, which leads into the neighbouring Cameroon.

Residents of the town told THISDAY that although the cause of the explosion was yet to be ascertained, it was believed to have been caused by the terrorist group, Boko Haram.



The explosion occurred just as THISDAY learnt that Borno State Governor, Prof. Babagana Umara Zulum, has rejected the plan by the military to evacuate two villages on the Maiduguri-Damaturu highway in a proactive measure to forestall Boko Haram activities.

Privacy & Cookies: This site uses cookies. By continuing to use this website, you agree to their use.  
To find out more, including how to control cookies, see here: [Cookie Policy](#)

Close and accept

Sources told THISDAY that the bomb detonated at about 3p.m. on Monday on the crowded bridge in the market town of Gamboru.

Apart from the 30 persons, reportedly killed on the spot, witnesses said over 35 other persons were injured and taken to the local hospital

One of the witnesses said: "All I can say is that I heard a loud bang and when I rushed to the bridge, I saw lifeless bodies, about 30 in all."

He added that he assisted in taking about 35 other persons injured to the hospital.

However, a source at one of the United Nations agencies in Maiduguri, who pleaded anonymity, told THISDAY that the explosion killed nine persons and injured 17 others.

The source said though the cause of the explosion still remained a mystery, suicide bombing had been ruled out.

The source in the UN agency, in a text message, said: "The explosion only killed nine persons. The blast was heard around 3.30p.m. yesterday (Monday) on the Gamboru Bridge. It was originally thought to be a PBIED (suicide bombers) but this was later reversed. The source of the explosion is still unconfirmed, according to our sources (security)."

"After the explosion, Nigerian military closed the bridge. Our numbers show nine killed (not 30) and 17 injured. We cannot be quoted on this at all."

A member of the civilian joint task force (CJTF) had earlier told THISDAY that an improvised explosive device detonated on the bridge, killing scores of people in Gamboru.

Spokesman of the Nigerian Army, Col. Sagir Musa, did not respond to enquiries by THISDAY, while the spokesman of the Borno State governor, Mallam Isa Gusau, said he could not volunteer any comment yet.

### **Borno Gov Rejects Plan to Evacuate Two Villages**

Meanwhile, Zulum has rejected plan by the military to evacuate two villages on the Maiduguri-Damaturu highway.

The governor had on Monday accused soldiers and policemen of extorting N1, 000 from travelers, who had no national ID card at a checkpoint.

The governor yesterday on the same route, accused the military of plotting to evacuate two communities without following due process.

The military had alleged that the recent increase in attacks on the Maiduguri-Damaturu highway was as a result of the accommodation of insurgents in the two communities along the highway.

A team led by Gen. Adeniyi was ambushed along the axis on Monday.

The governor accused that the army of not notifying either the state government or the federal government before embarking on the evacuation.

Umara said: "No formal piece of notice was given to his government. Neither the state emergency management agency nor the North-east Development Commission was told that such an exercise would be carried out."

The source said the development made the governor to pay an unscheduled visit to the two communities.

THISDAY gathered that the highway was deserted during the trip of the governor to the villages.

It was also gathered that the people of the two villages had already been profiled before the governor's arrival at Jakana at about 11.30a.m.

The governor's convoy even came across that of the Theatre Commander's heading back to Maiduguri from Mainok.

The two personalities exchanged pleasantries and had brief discussion, which journalists were not privy to.

Before Mainok, many patrol vehicles filled with armed soldiers were sighted, with several commercial vehicles also seen parked on a long queue outside Mainok village.

At Mainok, thousands of people, mostly women and children, were seen standing by the roadside with their baggage.

Some of them, who spoke to journalists, alleged that soldiers had ordered them out of their homes as early as 5 a.m.

Zulum also yesterday lauded the Nigerian Army for the swiftness with which it announced readiness to immediately investigate the allegation that troops were extorting passengers along the Maiduguri-Damaturu highway.

Zulum had on Monday alleged that soldiers and policemen manning the state highways were extorting the people.

The governor was apparently annoyed to find numerous motorists stranded on getting to Njimtulo where a gate was constructed on the highway to check people coming into or leaving Maiduguri, the state capital.

Umara, who had alleged that the military and police were collecting a bribe of N1,000 from each traveller without national identity card, had called Gen. Adeniyi to come to the scene.

Adeniyi had explained to the governor that the gridlock was not caused by soldiers but by Boko Haram attack on the highway but the governor rejected his explanation, saying that he was an eyewitness to the extortion.

Reacting to the governor's allegation, the Nigerian Army Headquarters promised to carry out a thorough investigation into the allegation of extortion by its personnel in the state with a view to sanctioning them.

The Nigerian Army Operations' Media Coordinator, Col. Aminu Iliyasu, in a statement yesterday, said the Nigerian Army as a professional and disciplined institution viewed such allegations seriously, particularly coming from a governor.

According to him, it is on record that, whenever such allegations of troops' misconduct are made, the Nigerian Army has never reneged in conducting thorough investigations to establish them.

"Where any infractions were established against any personnel, appropriate sanctions were

"Thus, the Nigerian Army wishes to assure the good people of Borno State and indeed the nation at large that any allegations of misconduct against its troops will be duly investigated and culprits will be dealt with accordingly," he said.

Responding to army's decision to probe the alleged extortion, Zulum, in a statement yesterday by Gusau said the speedy response from the army headquarters only reaffirmed the exceptional leadership credentials of the Chief of Army Staff, Lt. Gen. Tukur Buratai and many others that have done so much for Borno State and Nigeria.

"Governor Zulum is very pleased with the swift action from the army headquarters and by implication, headquarters of Operation Lafiya Dole.

"Governor Zulum's encounter with security officials around Njimtilo yesterday happened spontaneously. He was on his way to Jakana to meet citizens over a recent attack by insurgents. Going to Jakana required the governor's convoy passing through Njimtilo. As someone who took oath to serve the people of Borno State under every situation, he could not drive pass the gridlock he saw around Njimtilo, hence he needed to step in," the statement explained.

The governor added that Monday's encounter did not and would not change the high regard he had for all the security personnel operating in Borno, particularly soldiers who give up their lives and safety in finding peace for Borno.

The Nigerian Army has also confirmed that Boko Haram, on Monday, attacked the convoy of Gen. Adeniyi and three generals in his convoy.

A statement by Iiyasu said the attack occurred two kilometers to Auno in Kaga Local Government Area of Borno State while returning from Jakana where he visited troops' location following his earlier meeting with Zulum.

"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 Theater 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 kilometers to Auno in Kaga LGA of Borno State while returning from Jakana where he visited troops' location following his earlier meeting with the Governor of Borno State, Professor Babagana Umara Zulum, at Auno', it said.

The war update stated that troops in Gen. Adeniyi's convoy fought back the Boko Haram insurgents and forced them to flee.

---

Share this:

