

ECOWAS Condemns Attack on Beninese Border Districts with Niger, Burkina Faso

● **Terrorists attack Nigeria's border facilities** ● **Yar'adua visits families of 23 local security personnel killed in Katsina**
● **SERAP takes Tinubu's govt, govs to regional body's court over 'misuse of Cybercrimes Act'**

Chuks Okocha, Michael Olugbode
and **Sunday Aborisade** in Abuja with agency report

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission has condemned an attack on Benin Republic by suspected terrorists, which left many people dead, including soldiers.

In a related development, suspected terrorists also attacked Nigeria's border facilities at the Kangiwa Border in Kangiwa Local Government Area of Kebbi State.

That was as Chairman, Senate Committee on the Army, and Chairman, Northern Senators Forum, Senator Abdulaziz Yar'adua, condoled with the security forces of Yan Sakai over the loss of 23 of their members on January 7 to a terrorist attack in Kwanta Bauna, Baure town, in Safana Local Government Area of Katsina State.

At the same time, Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) filed a lawsuit against President Bola Tinubu's government and the state governors over "the repressive use of the Cybercrimes (Amendment) Act 2024 to criminalise legitimate expression and violate the human rights of Nigerians, including activists, journalists, bloggers and social media users."

Reports had it that Benin forces suffered heavy losses in the attack near the border with Niger and Burkina Faso, two Sahelian countries, which left ECOWAS after the military regime of the countries came under attack.

The national guard's chief of staff, Colonel Faizou Gornina, was reported to have said one of Benin's most well-equipped military positions was hit in the north last Wednesday evening.

"We've been dealt a very hard blow," he had said.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack, but Benin Republic has in recent years witnessed increasing attacks in the northern region blamed on jihadist groups based in neighbouring countries.

More than 120 Beninese military officers were killed between 2021 and December 2024, a diplomatic source told the AFP news agency.

Though Gornina did not provide a death toll for Wednesday's attack, the main opposition party, The Democrats, said about 30 soldiers were killed in the Alibori region.

Just last month, gunmen killed three soldiers and wounded four others who were guarding an oil pipeline in the north-east of the country.

The recent attack could have led to 28 deaths, according to AFP.

In 2022, Benin deployed nearly 3,000

troops to curb cross-border incursions and reinforce security in the north.

In a communique at the weekend, ECOWAS Commission condemned the heinous attacks in the Point Tible area by unidentified armed men on Wednesday, 8 January 2025, which it resulted in dozens of casualties.

The communique read, "The ECOWAS Commission expresses its deepest condolences to the government, security forces, and people of the Republic of Benin, as well as to the families of the brave soldiers who lost their lives protecting their country and wishes a speedy recovery to the injured.

"ECOWAS remains steadfast in its commitment to eradicate terrorism in West Africa, including through the on-going operationalization of the Counterterrorism Plan of Action in all its forms. ECOWAS calls on all Member States to intensify their cooperation in intelligence sharing and border security.

"ECOWAS expresses its full solidarity with the Government and people of Benin. It reiterates its determination to accompany Member States in their efforts to ensure the safety and security of Community citizens."

Meanwhile, terrorists were said to have killed four persons, a local watchman and three contractors, at

a Nigerian border town.

A statement by the spokesman of the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), Kenneth Udo, said, "The service regrets to announce a recent attack by a suspected terrorist group on Border facilities and contractors on site, at the Kangiwa Border in Kangiwa Local Government Area of Kebbi State about 1920 hours on Friday, 10th, January 2025.

"The attack led to the death of four persons; a local watchman and three contractors. No Immigration officer was killed during the attack. However, the service recorded substantial damages on its border facilities.

"Our heartfelt condolences go out to the families of the deceased. The service is actively working alongside other sister security agencies to identify and apprehend those responsible for these heinous acts and bring them to justice.

"The Nigeria Immigration Service remains steadfast in fulfilling its core mandate of border security, aligned with the overarching objective of enhancing national security."

Yar'adua Visits Families of 23 Local Security Men Killed by Terrorists in Katsina

Chairman, Senate Committee on

Army, and Chairman, Northern Senators Forum, Senator Abdulaziz Yar'adua, condoled with Yan Sakai over the loss of 23 of their members on January 7 to terrorists in Kwanta Bauna, Baure town, in Safana Local Government Area of Katsina State.

Yan Sakai is a local Hausa vigilante defence group helping to repel terrorist attacks in the North-west geopolitical zone.

Safana, like many parts of Katsina State, has faced reoccurring attacks from bandits targeting vulnerable communities over the years.

Yar'adua, who represents Katsina Central Senatorial District, visited the community on Saturday in company with Deputy Speaker of Katsina State House of Assembly, Hon. Abduljalil Runka.

On his team, according to a statement by his media office, yesterday, were also Chairman of Safana Local Government Area and a chairmanship candidate for Batsari Local Government Area.

The statement explained that they visited the families and relatives of the deceased local security personnel, as well as the Emir of Ruma Hakimin Batsari, to offer their condolences.

"In a show of support, Senator Yar'adua presented N50,000 to the

families of each officer, who lost their life in the attack. This gesture demonstrates the senator's commitment to standing with the people of Katsina State in times of hardship and tragedy," the statement said.

SERAP Takes Tinubu, Govs to ECOWAS Court over 'Misuse of Cybercrimes Act'

Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) filed a lawsuit against the Tinubu government and the 36 states governors over "the repressive use of the Cybercrimes (Amendment) Act 2024 to criminalise legitimate expression and violate the human rights of Nigerians, including activists, journalists, bloggers and social media users".

The ECOWAS Court had in its judgement dated March 25, 2022, "ordered Nigerian authorities to stop using section 24 of the Cybercrime Act 2015 to prosecute anyone on the grounds of insulting or stalking public officials online".

The court declared section 24 as "arbitrary, vague and repressive" and ordered Nigerian authorities "to repeal it in conformity with the country's human rights obligations".