



LAUNCH: From right— Representative of Abia State Governor, Mr. Mao Oluabunwa; Prof. Jerry Gana; Senator Ben Obi; Deputy Speaker, Emeka Ihedioha; author of the Book, Emeka Nwosu and Sarkin Karshi, HRH Ismaila Mohammed, during the launch of a book entitled, *Nigeria and Crisis of the Nation-State*, in Abuja. PHOTO: Gbemiga Olamikan.

16 die as JTF, gunmen clash in Borno

BY NDAHI MARAMA

MAIDUGURI—NO fewer than 16 people were, yesterday, confirmed killed, while several others were injured during a confrontation between the military Joint Task Force, JTF, and some gunmen in Maiduguri, Borno State capital, which lasted from 4pm, Tuesday, till the early hours of yesterday.

JTF said it killed 16 of the gunmen, even as five soldiers were said to have been seriously injured during the battle which was fought with heavy weapons from both sides, just as multiple explosions were heard throughout the period. Many houses also allegedly caught fire from the blasts.

The battle was fought in some areas of Lawan Bukar Street, Abbaganaram, Budum and Shehuri wards in the Maiduguri metropolis. Residents in the affected areas had remained indoors for the last 24 hours.

According to sources, men of the JTF had cordoned off the area after warning residents to stay in their houses as they engaged the gunmen, who had come out fully armed to engage the military and other security agencies.

Although it could not be ascertained whether members of the JTF were among those killed, the Field Operations Commander of the JTF, Col. Victor Ebhaleme told newsmen that the casualties were all members of an Islamist sect.

However, an eyewitness, who spoke to Vanguard on condition of

anonymity, said he saw about five JTF members, who were seriously injured, being taken to the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital. He could not say whether they were dead or alive.

The source further doubted the figure said to have been killed, pointing out that over 66 people died.

The family house of Governor Kashim Shettima is located in Abbaganaram-Budum-Lawan-Bukar street where the fight took place.

The confrontation reportedly started, Tuesday, when gunmen attacked one of JTF local bases in Budum area before JTF reorganised and repelled them in a fight characterised by multiple explosions, Tuesday night.

Meanwhile, Mohammed Goni College of Legal and Islamic Studies, BOCOLIS, which is a few metres away from the troubled spot, became a haven for fleeing residents and students at the time of this report.

... as Bauchi church attack victims are buried

BY SUZAN EDEH

BAUCHI—IT was a day of sorrow and wailing, yesterday, in Bauchi State as five victims of last Sunday's suicide bomb attack at the Living Faith Church a.k.a. Winners Chapel, were buried.

At least 20 people lost their lives while several others were injured during the attack at Yelwa Tudu area, by a lone bomber in a Honda Civic saloon car.

Among those buried, yesterday, were a former member of the House of Representatives in the Second Republic, Mr. Irmiya Hassan Dodo, 67; Joseph Kehinde Aiyedipe, 30, student of Federal Polytechnic, Bauchi; Samuel Olusegun, 16, an SS II student of Divine International School, Bauchi; Augustine Effion Ita, 32, an Adolescent Health specialist, and a final year student of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi, Suru Bamgboshe.

The deceased who were members of the Living Faith Church, were interred at the Christian Cemetery at Yelwa Kagadama at about 12: 30pm.

The Presiding Pastor of the church, Gaus Biyal, in his brief sermon admonished Christians not to seek revenge against anyone over what happened to their family members or friends.

'Vengeance is the of Lord'

He said: "Vengeance belongs to the Lord. Vengeance belongs to Jesus Christ who was persecuted for our sake. It is He that can fight on our behalf. He knows what to do and if we try to do it ourselves, we will die in the process."

Chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN, in the state, Rev. Pokti Lewi also asked Christians not to take the laws into their hands because of what happened, warning that CAN as a body will not support such action.