



BREAKING NEWS

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25 killed as Boko Haram, Civilian JTF clash in Borno

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By Luka Binniyat & NDAHI MARAMA

MAIDUGURI — Suspected members of Islamic sect, Boko Haram, have killed more than 25 civilians, including five vigilante youths, when the youths attacked the sect members in Dawashi Village of Kukawa Local Government Area of Borno State, a border town with Niger and Chad Republic.

The vigilante youths, also known as Civilian JTF and popularly called Yan Gora, in Maiduguri, who have been assisting the men of the Joint Task Force, JTF, in arresting suspected Boko Haram members, were said to have been ambushed and killed, weekend, in Mainok Village of Konduga Local Government Area of Borno State.

It was gathered that the Mainok incident took place when some volunteer youths from Ajilari, Gomari and Bulunkutu Kasuwa wards of Jere and Maiduguri metropolis, stormed the village in their patrol vehicles.

They were there to arrest suspected sects members. But the Civilian JTF, who went without the cover of the military task force were overpowered as the terrorists fired gunshots on their convoy, killing five of them, with one injured.



(http://www.vanguardngr.com/?attachment_id=406391)

A handout picture released by the Nigerian army showing Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) medical officers treating civilians injured by suspected members of the Boko Haram Islamist sect in village of Dawashe, in the Kukawa district of Borno. AFP PHOTO

Mainok, about 50 kilometers away from Maiduguri, is one of the areas dominated by suspected Boko Haram members until last month when JTF raided the village and killed over 40 terrorists, burning of over 100 motorcycles suspected to have been used for terrorists activities.

When news of the killings of the five civilian JTF filtered into Maiduguri yesterday, as their corpses arrived Umaru Shehu Specialist Hospital, some members of the vigilante youths mobilised to Mainok village with the back up of military JTF and set the entire village ablaze.

JTF spokesman confirms incident

Confirming the Mainok incident, JTF spokesman, Lieutenant Colonel Sagir Musa, in a statement to newsmen said the vigilante youths were on operation in Mainok town over the weekend.

He said that in the course of their operation, they were attacked by suspected Boko Haram members.

Sagir said both the deceased and the wounded were in Shehu Umar Specialist Hospital Bulumkutu in Maiduguri metropolis.

He added that on hearing the news at about 11p.m. last Friday, JTF troops were drafted to the area and have been operating on Mainok and surrounding villages to apprehend the bandits, pointing out that the situation in the area was now calm.

On the killing of 20 innocent civilians in Dawashi, it was gathered that a group of volunteer youth from Maiduguri stormed Dawashi village in search of Boko Haram members when the suspected sect members came armed and fired sporadic shots that killed over 20 innocent civilians, while a dozen had serious gunshot injuries.

The victims, it was gathered were mostly fishermen and traders.

It was also gathered that the Dawashi, Daban Masara and Malan Karanti of Kukawa areas were considered stronghold of the sect.

Media Coordinator of the Multinational Joint Task Force, MJTF, in Baga town of Kukawa Local Government, Lieutenant Haruna Mohammed, also confirmed the incident.

He said: “At the time of compiling this report, the victims were still lying within the premises of MNJTF Field Ambulance, receiving medical treatment from the injury sustained during the attack.”

Oritsejafor

In a related development, President of Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN, Pastor Ayo Oristejafor, weekend, regretted that policies and the inaction of United States of America had helped sustain what he said was the persecution of Nigerian Christians in Northern Nigeria.

He lamented what he described as failure of US to designate the Islamist group as Foreign Terrorist Organisation, FTO.

The CAN President also revealed that 70 percent of all killings targeted at Christians globally, are from Northern Nigeria with 3,000 killed and over 500 Churches burnt between 2010 and 2012.

Oristejafor, who addressed the Christian Association of Nigeria in America, CANAN, in Washington DC, weekend, however hailed the activities of some Muslims youths in parts of Borno State, who have been tagged Civilian JTF, for assisting JTF in Borno State in hunting down fleeing members of Boko Haram.

His speech read in part: “I was recently re-elected into my second and final term as President of Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN, an aggregation of all Nigeria’s 80 million Christians.

“The population of Christians in Nigeria is equivalent to the entire country of Egypt. The population of Christians in northern Nigeria is more than the entire population of Syria.

“We are by no means a minority, which makes what we are going through all the more alarming and a warning to countries who believe Islamist terrorism and insurgency could never happen in their territories.

Statistics

“In my first term, about 3,000 Christians were killed. Last year alone it averaged over 100 every month. In March 2010 about 500 Christians were slaughtered in one night on an attack on their villages.

“In April 2011 we lost over 500 churches, thousands of homes and businesses in a 48-hour period and in 2012 about 70 percent of all Christians killed worldwide were in northern Nigeria alone.”

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