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As insurgents kill 13 in Bauchi...Bombers dress in military uniform

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By SUZAN EDEH

The wave of bombings by suspected Boko Haram insurgents across the country continued at the weekend after 13 persons were killed in an attack in Bauchi, the capital of Bauchi State.

34 others were injured in the blast, according to Bauchi State Police Commissioner, Mallam Lawal Shehu.

Shehu disclosed that a suspect had been arrested in connection with the attack.

The Bauchi bombing came on the heels of the Abuja plaza attack on Wednesday which claimed 21 lives.



(<http://dvsl3w2q45hb8.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/KANO-BLAST2.jpg>)

FILE PHOTO: A man checks the wreckage of a car at the scene of a suicide blast at the predominantly Christian Sabon Gari neighbourhood in Kano, northern Nigeria, on May

Iso at the weekend, a former Minister of Police Affairs, Alaowei Broderick Bozimo, called for the radicalisation of youths against Boko Haram.

“Deliberate efforts should be made to energize the youths to work, it is their tomorrow that is being endangered not ours because we are already old. You will be amazed that when young people are empowered, they can betray some of their people in the Islamist group. As they recruit beggars, we too should recruit beggars. Radicalize the youths positively, the market associations; the youths should actually patrol the streets, let it be a mass movement thing, that is the only way out”, Bozimo told Sunday Vanguard in an

18, 2014.

interview.

Yesterday's bombing occurred in the red light district of Bayan Garin, specifically an hotel allegedly thronged by prostitutes, on Friday night.

The area also has a large Christian population.

An improvised explosive device (IED) was believed to have been planted in the hotel. A report quoted a survivor as saying the attackers wore military uniform. Sunday Vanguard learnt that the blast in the hotel was the second in two years.

A source said the first bombing in the hotel took place in 2012 and left several people injured.

The incident, which happened around 9.50pm, threw residents of the state capital into panic as traders and Okada riders abandoned their businesses and took cover.

Confirming the blast, the state Commissioner of Police, Shehu, said efforts were being intensified to arrest other fleeing suspects.

"From the investigation conducted by the police, some suspected hoodlums were seen loitering around the brothel and the next thing that happened was an explosion", he said.

"The area has been cordoned off and the scene secured by the Police Explosive Ordinance Disposal Unit (EOD).

"The victims were rushed to Abubakar Tafawa Balewa Teaching Hospital (ATBU) for treatment and corpses evacuated to the mortuary".

The police boss advised members of the public to always be security conscious by paying attention to persons and objects, particularly at motor parks, market places, schools, places of worship, shopping malls, eateries and hotels.

"The police have put in place strategies to fight insurgency in Bauchi State by intensifying surveillance, intelligence gathering and working in collaboration with sister security agents to secure lives and property."

Speaking on the bombing, yesterday, Bauchi State Commissioner for Health, Dr. Sani Malami, said 34 injured victims were taken to hospital in the late hours of Friday out of which 17 with minor injuries were treated and discharged.

"There are 17 others with varying degree of injuries who are still on admission, but we are hoping that many of them would be discharged today (yesterday), while a few victims will have to go to the theatre because of the seriousness of their injuries", Malami told journalists. .

"Unfortunately, 13 people were, so far, confirmed dead. 10 bodies were brought to hospital yesterday (Friday) night and three more victims died in the hospital.

He explained that some victims rushed to clinics in Bauchi were transferred to the ATBUTH for proper attention.

According to him, Bauchi is a peaceful state but quite unfortunate that the bombing happened.

"We are really shattered and heartbroken that this incident happened in Bauchi and pray that it will not happen again", the commissioner said.

'Shooting at random'

Meanwhile, a survivor, Ahmed Maidoki, told the News Agency of Nigeria that five persons in military uniform carried out the attack by detonating explosives and shooting at random.

“We were just sitting down, watching highlights of the ongoing FIFA world cup at the viewing centre located in between the two story building of the hotel when five men dressed in military uniform strolled in”, he narrated..

“We thought they were security personnel, who came to relax as well. I noticed they all positioned themselves at the four corners of the hall.

“The next thing I heard was an explosion, after which the arena was covered with thick smoke. Shivering, my friends and I sprawled on the ground.

“We were trying to get out when the five men started shooting sporadically at any one who tried to stand up, and in the process, killing many of the survivors of the blast,” he said.

Another witness, Usman Hassan, said he was just about to enter the hotel when the blast occurred and immediately ran away from the scene.

“As soon as I was a bit far from the scene, I heard gun-shots. Few minutes later, a white Toyota Hilux vehicle zoomed out of the hotel on high speed with men wearing army uniforms”, he said.

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