



35 killed in Borno market explosion, other attacks

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By Ndahi Marama

MAIDUGURI—Thirty-five persons were killed, yesterday, and several others injured during attacks by Boko Haram terrorists on three Borno communities. The three communities were Biu, the largest Borno town in the southern part of the state, Alkideow and Mbuta.



Joint Military Task Force (JTF) patrolling the streets of the restive northeastern Nigerian town of Maiduguri, Borno State. AFP (File photo)

In Biu, a deadly explosion from a bomb that went off in a crowded market, reportedly killed 15 people with 21 others injured, according to witnesses.

Witnesses said the injured persons and corpses were being evacuated. Biu is the largest Borno town in the southern part of the state, located 187 kilometres south of Maiduguri, the state capital.

A resident of the town, Mwajim Ali Gana said: "A suicide bomber today (yesterday) launched an attack on innocent marketers on Biu plateau".

Another eye witness said: "I was buying some soup ingredients at the vegetable section of the market around 3:15pm and suddenly there was a heavy sound and the market was covered with dust as the entire place was thrown into confusion. Human parts littered the scene as survivors scrambled for safety".

A member of the Biu Youth volunteer vigilante group, popularly called "Civilian JTF" involved in the rescue of the victims told Vanguard on phone that a suspected member of the Boko Haram sect entered the vegetable section of the Market and detonated the Improvised Explosive Device (IED), killing several people at the market.

He said so far 15 bodies have been recovered while several other people with various degrees of injuries are currently receiving medical attention at the Biu General Hospital.

A medical doctor at the Biu hospital, who pleaded anonymity, said that seven bodies were brought from the scene, while eight persons died shortly after.

He also said 21 others with severe injuries were being prepared for referral to other major hospitals within and outside the state.

Yesterday's suicide bomb attack was the first ever suicide mission in Biu town since the commencement of the Boko Haram insurgency.

A security source in Biu said a female suicide bomber detonated an Improved Explosive Device (IED) in Biu Main market killing three persons including the suicide bomber while 10 others were injured.

He said the female suicide bomber came to the market and detonated the IED which was attached to her body at about 3:30 pm, adding that those injured were rushed to Biu General Hospital for treatment'.

"The female suicide bomber sneaked into the market through the Third Gate of the Main market, when people were busy carrying out their business activities", he added.

Another 20 persons killed in Mafa LG

In another development, more than two dozen suspected members of Boko Haram gunmen in a convoy of motorcycles attacked Mbuta village in Mafa Local Government Area of Borno State, killed nine people and torched of several houses and shops at about 7.25am, yesterday.

Mbuta village is near Khaddamari; the council headquarters of Jere, and 25 kilometres north-east of Maiduguri, the state capital.

According to the village head, Mallam Zakari, in a telephone conversation yesterday in Maiduguri; "the insurgents riding motorcycles attacked Alkideow village near our village, Mbuta as early as 4.30am but failed in taking away their cows, after killing nine people, before proceeding to Mbuta village by 7.20am and torched several houses and shops. When the gunmen burst into my village, they started shooting sporadically at any person in sight. Our houses and shops were not spared, as they killed 11 of my people here, including two old women, who were burnt to death in their huts, before the early morning attack on us," said Zakari yesterday.

He added that "the bodies of the slain villagers littered the outskirts of Mbuta, as gunmen pursued them into the bush when they attempted to flee their houses. Two of my people escaped to Maiduguri with gunshot wounds, while other villagers who survived fled into the bush as the terrorists were still hunting for them, after they burnt down many of their houses."

Vanguard also learnt that two hours after the attack, soldiers and some members of Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) stationed at Zabarmari rushed to the village, but the gunmen had fled on motorcycles towards the Mafa-Dikwa axis border areas with Cameroon. The Borno State police command, yesterday, also said that there were attacks on the outskirts of Maiduguri with some villagers feared killed in the early hours of yesterday.

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