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TRANSLATE:::



10-yr-old girl suicide bomber kills seven in Yobe

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*Borno town falls to Boko Haram

By Bala Ajiya (Damaturu) with Agency reports

A girl, about 10 years old, carried out a suicide attack at popular Tasha Market/motor park in Damaturu, Yobe State capital, yesterday, killing seven and injuring 31, witnesses said. The killings came on a day it was revealed that Boko Haram Islamists had recaptured a strategic town in Borno State.

“A girl aged about 10 detonated an explosive under her clothes as she approached the market’s perimeter fence,” said Danbaba Nguru, a shopkeeper who witnessed the attack.

The head of the local Sani Abacha General Hospital, Dr Garba Fika, said six bodies and 32 injured had arrived there with one person dying after being admitted.

The Damaturu market has been repeatedly targeted in a string of previous suicide attacks.

“I was in the station when I saw the young girl arrive,” said bus driver Musbahu Lawan.

“I think she noticed the guards checking people at the gates and decided to detonate the explosive in the middle of the crowd outside the gates.”

Nguru added: “The road leading to the gates is always full of small traders... I was lucky not to have been hit.”

No claim of responsibility for the attack has been made but Islamist group Boko Haram has frequently used young girls to carry out suicide attacks.



FILE SUICIDE ATTACK—Aid workers evacuate injured persons in the suicide blast in Potiskum, Yobe State.

Fika, who spoke while briefing Gov. Ibrahim Gaidam about the condition of the victims, yesterday, said: “ We received a total of 33 victims of bomb blast that occurred an hour ago; all of them sustained various degree of injuries, out of which seven are dead, while seven are under very critical condition.

“ We might refer those in critical condition to the Federal Medical Centre, Nguru and Federal Medical Centre Azare in Bauchi State respectively.

The Yobe State government had signed a Memorandum of Understanding with these health institutions, in case of emergency of this nature.

The medical director of Sani Abacha General Hospital, however, said that the victims, with mild injuries, were responding to treatment and would be discharged soon..

Mobilisation

He assured the governor that the management of the hospital had mobilised all medical personnel needed to ensure that the victims receive proper medical attention.

Fika called on the residents of Damaturu to donate blood in order to save the lives of the victims, stressing that they were in dire need of blood .

Responding, Gaidam condemned the incident , describing it as “very unfortunate.”

He commiserated with the families of the victims and prayed for the repose of the souls of those who died as a result of the incident.

The governor, who promised to settle the medical bills of all the victims, expressed optimism that insurgency would soon be a thing of the past in the country.

Gaidam advised people to be security conscious, report any suspicious movement around them, and cooperate with security agents to enable them discharge their duties effectively.

In February, a woman suicide bomber attacked the same bus station, leaving seven dead and 32 injured.

The deputy governor of neighbouring Borno State, Mustapha Zannah, said, Friday, that he had seen a security report indicating that Boko Haram had recruited several suicide bombers to counter a regional military operation against it.

Town falls

Yesterday, Zannah announced the fall of Marte, located on a strategic trading route between Nigeria and neighbouring

Cameroon and Chad, to the Islamists.

“It is sad as we have been made to understand that Marte has today completely fallen under the control of the insurgents, which to us is a very huge setback,” he said.

The town has changed hands between the jihadists and government troops numerous times since 2013.

A regional military coalition of Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon has claimed a series of major victories against Boko Haram since launching sweeping offensives against the jihadists in February.

But the Islamist fighters, who recently pledged allegiance to the Islamic State extremists controlling swathes of Iraq and Syria, have been pushing back.

The jihadists killed at least 55 people in two raids on villages near Maiduguri, the first assault on the northern city in three months.

“Even if 90 percent of our communities have been liberated, the war is not yet over,” Zannah cautioned yesterday.

Boko Haram’s six-year insurgency has claimed some 15,000 lives and displaced about 1.5 million people.

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