

33 killed, dozens injured, houses burnt in triple suicide bombing, violence in Borno, Taraba

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No fewer than 30 persons were killed in triple suicide bombing by Boko Haram jihadists in Konduga, Borno State.

This is even as three persons were killed in fresh outbreak of violence in parts of Jalingo, the Taraba State capital.

These came as the Inspector General of Police, IGP Mohammed Adamu, declared, yesterday, that the crime rate in the country has declined.

In the Borno incident, three bombers detonated their explosives outside a hall in Konduga, 38 kilometres from the Borno State capital, Maiduguri, where football fans were watching a match on television.

“The death toll from the attack has so far increased to 30. We have over 40 people injured,” Usman Kachalla, Head of Operations at the State Emergency Management Agency, SEMA, said yesterday.



Graphic content / Red Cross officials attend to victims of a triple suicide bombing, which occurred outside a hall in Konduga, 38 kilometres (24 miles) from the Borno state capital Maiduguri, northeast Nigeria, on June 17, 2019. – Thirty people were killed late on June 16 in a triple suicide bombing in northeast Nigeria, emergency services reported, in an attack bearing the hallmarks of the Boko Haram jihadist group. Three bombers detonated their explosives outside a hall in Konduga, 38 kilometres (24 miles) from the Borno state capital Maiduguri, where football fans were watching a match on TV. (Photo AFP)

Leader of a self-defence group in the town, Ali Hassan, said the attack occurred around 9pm, Sunday night, adding that the owner of the viewing centre prevented one of the bombers from entering the packed venue.

“There was a heated argument between the operator and the bomber who blew himself up, also killing the operator,” Hassan said by phone.

Two other bombers, who had mingled among the crowd at a tea stall nearby also detonated their suicide vests.

Hassan said most of the victims were from outside the soccer viewing centre, noting that “nine people died on the spot, including the operator, and 48 were injured.”

Kachala said the high number of fatalities was because emergency responders were unable to reach the site of the blast on time, nor were they equipped to deal with large number of wounded persons.

“Lack of an appropriate health facility to handle such huge emergency situation and the delay in obtaining security clearance to enable us deploy from Maiduguri in good time led to the high death toll,” he said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but the attack bore the imprint of Boko Haram, which has led a decade-long campaign to establish a hardline Islamic state in North East Nigeria.

3 killed in Taraba

In Jalingo, Taraba State, three persons were killed, while many houses were burnt as youth from different ethnic groups in the state clashed in the city, Sunday night.

A senior government official said suspected herdsmen had threatened to invade the town but security personnel did not take the warning seriously.

The source said three persons were killed during the attack.

A witness, Ibro Bala, said ATC Kofai, an area largely populated by university students, was affected during the crisis, which claimed three lives.

He said: “It’s actually a clash between herdsmen and a tribe called Kona. It started about two months ago when the herdsmen attacked them in their local communities.

“So, yesterday (Sunday), Kona youth went on the rampage in an area called ATC Kofai, at about 2 pm to 5 pm. The youth around there started attacking all the people, burning houses that belong to them. Many people were also killed, while houses and cars were burnt.

“Security operatives came later, around 7pm, but the boys were still struggling, exchange of gunshot was heard. About five or more cars were burnt down.”

Confirming the clash, yesterday, the state police command said it took place at Tudiri village in Ardo Kola Local Government Area, on the outskirts of Taraba State.

Spokesman of the Police command, DSP David Misal, in a statement, however, said no life was lost but noted that some shops were looted.

But an eyewitness who spoke on condition of anonymity, said one person was killed.

Buhari commiserates with victims' families

Meanwhile, President Muhammadu Buhari has commiserated with families of victims of the bomb blasts.

The president in a statement by his Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Chief Femi Adesina in Abuja, yesterday, sent condolences to the government and people of the state over attacks by suicide bombers.

Buhari decried the heinous acts, stressing that perpetrators of evil acts have judgment awaiting them, not only from man, via the long arms of the law, but also from God Almighty.

He urged security agents to sustain surveillance in all theatres of security challenges in the country, taking into consideration the unconventional methods deployed by terrorists to harm innocent and unsuspecting victims.

The president commended the efforts of emergency response workers and humanitarian organisations.

He prayed that God will grant the souls of the departed eternal rest and comfort their families.

Crime rate declining in Nigeria—IGP Adamu

Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Adamu, yesterday declared that the crime rate in the country has declined, noting that the last few weeks had witnessed new patterns and threats of criminality that had necessitated a review of strategy.

Noting that the successes in tackling the different criminal challenges were a fallout of *Operation Puff Adder* currently going on across the country, the IGP urged Zonal AIGs and Command CPs to redouble their efforts as the battle was still far from over.

Buttressing his declaration that crime was on the decline in the country, the IGP said: “Sequel to the launch of *Operation Puff Adder* in all the states of the federation and other security strategies recently emplaced to address internal security threats, a total 424 kidnappers were arrested between May 10 and June 14, 2019.

“The highest number of 101 kidnap suspects were arrested in Kaduna State, followed by Katsina State with 79 arrests. 54 suspects were apprehended in Nasarawa State and 32 in Taraba.

“In the same vein, 44 murder suspects were arrested during the period under review, with the highest number of seven in FCT and six in Kano State.

“In addition, 276 armed robbery suspects were arrested within the same period, with the highest number of 38 in Edo State, followed by 25 in Nasarawa State and 23 in FCT.

“Similarly, 10,860 ammunition of various descriptions and calibre were recovered, while a total of 301 firearms, including a rocket launcher, AK-47 assault rifles, pistols and locally made gun, were similarly recovered from criminal elements across the country, with the highest number of 80 in Katsina State, followed by Edo State with 26 and Kaduna State with 25.

“Furthermore, 176 suspected cultists were arrested across the country, while 77 stolen vehicles were recovered by Operation Puff Adder operatives nationwide between May 10, and June 14, 2019, with the highest number of 29 in FCT.

“It is to be emphasized that the achievements were recorded with the cooperation of members of the public in a manner that clearly demonstrates the increasing determination of the citizens to support the Police in restoring internal security.”

“It was also the result of the sacrifice, courage, zeal and exceptional dedication of police commanders and other ranks.

“We might have taken giant steps against crime and criminality but the battle is still far from over. I, therefore, charge you to sustain the sense of commitment to duty as it represents a sacred call to nation.”

Earlier the IGP told the senior officers that he convened the conference in furtherance of ‘my policy’ of constantly engaging strategic police commanders to

undertake periodic review of internal security situation in the country.

“This is with a view to proffering pragmatic and far-reaching solutions to crimes in the country.

In this regard, the conference will review the pattern and trend of crimes over the past one month, highlight our achievements, identify our challenges, geo-locate the current security threats and evaluate strategies with a view to strengthening our crime management template.”

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