

How B/Haram killed dozens of soldiers in Borno ambush — Locals

- Lawmaker confirms attack
- Ending security challenges a matter of time — Buhari
- President's claims in UNGA speech not true — Minority Reps Caucus

By Johnbosco Agbakwuru, Levinus Nwabughio and Ndahe Marama

Dozens of military troops on pass and on their way to Maiduguri, Borno State capital, on Friday, were ambushed by suspected members of Boko Haram linked to ISWAP, killing several of them, locals said yesterday.

The incident, according to the locals, took place between Marte-Dikwa council areas, when the insurgents fired rocket launchers at military trucks which culminated into sporadic shootings targeting troops being conveyed from Marte to Maiduguri after spending some time at the theatre.

Marte, about 180km north of Maiduguri, remains one of the council areas of Borno not fully occupied by civilian population, as most of its people are displaced and taking refuge in Monguno, and some parts of Maiduguri.

Initially locals told our correspondent that 16 soldiers lost their lives in the ambush, but it was later learnt that "about 30 soldiers were killed while others sustained gunshot injuries".

"What happened to troops along Marte-Dikwa axis was very devastating, sounding a warning that the end to terrorists attacks is not realistic. Some soldiers who have spent some time were given pass to pay visit to their families/loved ones. Unfortunately, while they were on their way from Marte to Maiduguri, they were ambushed by suspected armed ISWAP fighters who fired rocket launchers at the trucks conveying them, leaving about 30 soldiers dead, even as some are still missing", one of the locals said.

All efforts to get confirmation from Borno State Police Command Public Relations Officer proved abortive at press time, while military spokesman's department did not issue a statement on the incident.

Meanwhile, member representing Marte in Borno State House of Assembly, Hon. Engineer Mohammed Gamboni, in a telephone chat with our correspondent, confirmed the ambush.

Although he said he didn't have details of deaths, he revealed that two members of Civilian Joint Task Force were killed with others sustained gunshot injuries.

Gamboni said he participated in the burial of the civilian victims at a Maiduguri cemetery on Friday, saying he also visited those who sustained injuries and receiving treatment at hospitals in Maiduguri.

In a related development, President Muhammad Buhari, yesterday, gave assurance that ending the security challenges in Nigeria is only a matter of time.

The President said the support by the United States has made a great difference in Nigeria's efforts to stamp out terrorism within its borders.

The assurance of ending the security challenges in the country was contained in a statement issued yesterday by the Special Adviser to the President on Media and Publicity, Chief Femi Adesina.

The statement further said that President indicated that America's support was a morale booster to the military,

and people of Nigeria in general when he met on Friday in New York with Her Excellency Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Permanent Representative of America to the United Nations.

The Nigerian leader said with supply of the Super Tucano aircraft purchased from America, and other helicopters on the way, ending the

security challenges in Nigeria was only a matter of time.

Also, yesterday, the Minority Caucus of the House of Representatives flayed the address presented by Buhari at the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), saying it didn't reflect the realities on the ground in the country.



Managing Director/CEO, Nigerian Breweries Plc, Mr. Hans Essaadi (left) presenting asouvenir to the Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu, during a courtesy visit at Lagos House, Marina, on Friday, September 24, 2021.

OTULU OWNERSHIP TUSSLE: Two Delta kingdoms at daggers drawn

*Otulu is our farm settlement-Issele-Azagba
*It's our satellite town—Ogwashi-Uku

By Festus Ahon

The people of Issele-Azagba in Aniocha North Local Government Area, Delta State, have said Otulu community in Aniocha South Local Government Area of the state belongs to them and not the people of Ogwashi-Uku.

The Obi of Issele-Azagba, HRM Francis Jidouwa, Agbogidi I, who stated this while briefing newsmen, said Otulu used to be the farm settlement of Issele-Azagba people.

Arguing that they extended electricity to Otulu community, he said they also attracted the schools and market to the town. He disclosed that the school was named after one of their sons, Chief Gabriel Nwanne.

Meanwhile, the traditional ruler of Ogwashi-Uku, Obi Ifechukwude Okonjo II, has insisted that "Otulu town remains a part and parcel of Ogwashi-Uku kingdom," stressing that "right from the time of our forebears, Otulu has remained a satellite town of Ogwashi-Uku and will always remain so".

However, Issele-Azagba monarch said: "When the Otulu market was to be commissioned in 1990, I was the person invited for the ceremony and I went with my subjects to welcome the military governor. Otulu market was commissioned the same day with Issele-Azagba market."

"We are the people who extended electricity to Otulu because Otulu belongs to Issele-Azagba, which they are enjoying today. If Ogwashi-Uku people were the owners of Otulu, they would have challenged us, but they did not challenge us."

"The secondary and primary schools in Otulu were also influenced by us. In fact, the Primary School in Otulu was

named after one of our sons, Chief Gabriel Nwanne. When people were coming to cut timber in Otulu, I was the one signing permit for them."

"We have a boundary with Akwukwu after Anwai. We have a boundary with Atuma. We have a boundary with Ubulu-Uku. These are the people we have boundaries with. The movement of Otulu from Aniocha North to Aniocha South was political."

"Isaac Okonjo whose mother is from Issele-Azagba was given over 20 hectares of land. Isaac Okonjo was former Secretary to the defunct Mid-west State government. In order to protect the land given to him by his mother's people, he moved Otulu from Aniocha North to Aniocha South and that was the beginning of the crisis."

Enugu group frowns at attacks on Affairs Minister

By Kennedy Mbele

A socio-cultural organization in Enugu State, Ndi Nwe Ani Enugu, has frowned at media attacks on the immediate past Nigeria's Ambassador to Namibia, Lilian Onoh.

Another group under the auspices of Enugu Concerned Professionals had, in a statement by one Dr Frank Udezue and Pharm. Dozie Nwobu, had attacked Onoh for writing a petition to the Presidency on the Foreign Affairs Minister, Geoffrey Onyeama.

Following the media attacks, the President of Ndi Nwe Ani Enugu, Mr Okwo Nwa Ogbodo, in a statement at the weekend, said his group would no longer take it kindly with anyone who attacks Onoh again, accusing the Minister of Foreign Affairs of being behind the persons attacking

In a statement by the Minority Leader of the House, Hon. Ndudi Elumelu, yesterday, the caucus said after reviewing Buhari's speech, it became obvious that the President's outing was a disservice to the nation.

According to Elumelu, contrary to the President's claims that Boko Haram has been weakened, the deadly sect has become emboldened in their attacks on military formations.

The caucus added that insecurity, killings and kidnappings amongst other social vices have persisted in the country.

"The ownership of Otulu is not in doubt. We are therefore calling on government to return Otulu back to Aniocha North. Otulu remains our property, our land and we will not cede an inch of our land to anybody or community."

"What happened in Otulu last weekend could be better imagined. We the Issele-Azagba people are peace-loving and we do not want any bloodshed. Hence we are calling on government to call the people of Ogwashi-Uku to order. From 1963 till date, we have won a number of cases and there are two still pending in court."

Recall that the people of Ogwashi-Uku and Otulu have been at war over the ownership of Otulu community. A youth from Otulu was killed last weekend by a stray bullet during the crisis.

their daughter.

Ogbodo noted that the attacks by Udezue and Nwobu, where they disparaged their daughter, were mere "petty, cowardly attacks that reflect the fear and desperation of their sponsor," saying the letter by their daughter to the Presidency on the Minister was in order.

He noted that the attacks did not address the issues Onoh raised in her petition to the President, but was a diversionary tactic to turn attention from Onoh's allegations against the Minister.

The group expressed outrage that Onyeama, who, they pointed out, coasted to a federal appointment on the back of Enugu State, which was created by the late Chief C.C. Onoh, a former governor of old Anambra State and father of Lilian, should turn around to try to attack their daughter.

The group pointed out that Ambassador Lilian had outstanding performance in