

Terrorists bomb Niger communities, kill 14

• Abduct several villagers • Joint Security Task Force Camp, 7 other houses burnt down • Police confirm death of 4 NSCDC personnel, 6 others

By Wole Mosadomi

MINNA—THE insecurity ravaging Niger State yesterday took a new dimension as terrorists planted and detonated explosives at strategic locations in some Villages in Shiroro Local Government killing no fewer than 14 persons including some personnel of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps, NSCDC.

It was also gathered that unspecified number of villagers were abducted, while many houses were completely razed including Joint Security Task Force Camp under renovation after it was razed last month.

But the state Police Command said 10 persons including four personnel of NSCDC were killed.

This new trend and renewed attack came barely one month after bandits invaded the same local government and Galkogo Community where 11 members of the Joint Security Task Force and other villagers were killed.

It was gathered that the attack was carried out by over 50 armed terrorists on about 50 motorcycles.

An eye witness said the attack started around 1:00 am yesterday and lasted till around 6:00 am, saying the terrorists first rode straight to the Joint Security Task Force Camp under renovation and razed it completely.

From there, they were said to have moved from house to house, killed whoever was found inside the various buildings, ransacked the buildings for food stuff and after which set the houses ablaze.

Speaking on the attack, Co-Convener, Concerned Shiroro Youths of Niger State, Sani Kokki, among others, said, "The use of Improvised Explosive Devices, IEDs by terrorists in the course of unleashing mayhem on unsuspecting victims is strange and has created panic among inhabitants. Concerns are however rife among residents of the areas about the ugly development bearing in mind the more devastating dimension this menace have taken. "Explosions of this magnitude are new and unusual which is attributable to kid gloves this war is being prosecuted by Government.

Chairman of Shiroro Local Government, Mallam Suleiman Chukuba who also confirmed the attack, said "from all indications, the attackers are not bandits but Boko Haram going by the sophistication of the weapons they were said to be carrying including explosive devices.

"One of the explosive devices planted round the community by the Terrorists went off this morning, (yesterday) destroying a Hilux Van belonging to the NSCDC with its personnel on their way to the community to ascertain the level of destruction by the gunmen. The total number of members of the NSCDC drafted

to the area early this morning, (Monday) could not be ascertained but only two in the vehicle survived the explosion. They are in critical condition and are receiving treatment at a government facility in Minna, the state capital while others were killed by the explosives.

"As I speak to you now, no single building is standing in the Community because everything was set ablaze and the entire community has been deserted. Right now we cannot ascertain the number of people that have been killed because the situation is quite serious. These are Boko Haram terrorists not bandits because they were heavily armed with sophisticated weapons including explosive devices.

Police confirm 10 deaths

Meanwhile, the State Police Command, said four personnel of the NSCDC died in the attack

The Commissioner of Police in the state, Mr Monday-Bala Kuryas, who confirmed the killing, also said that six other persons died in the attack.

Kuryas explained that the gunmen rode to the community on motorcycles, burnt down eight houses and a building under renovation, belonging to Joint Security Task Force.

According to him, a detachment of police tactical squad and the military personnel had been deployed to the area to track the criminals, saying "We appeal to

residents in the state to assist the security personnel deployed to the area with reliable information that could help in apprehending the criminals. "We are all out to deal with any person or group of people undermining the peaceful atmosphere of our state."

On his part, Commissioner for Local Government, Chieftaincy Affairs and Internal Security, Mr Emmanuel Umar, said "there was an attack and we are suspecting that they are Boko Haram. They were shooting sporadically on getting to the affected Communities. The state Government has responded by sending Security to the area and we are assuring the people of the state that Government is not relenting in securing the lives and properties of the people."

"I can confirm that four security members were killed and one seriously injured. The report flying around indicates that those killed were NSCDC members. We are also suspecting informants playing a dirty game from the communities because few days ago, there were security mop up in the area and we were planning to send in more security agents to the area. So, the informants must have divulged this information to the bandits necessitating the invasion.

"The bandits are trying to change our ways of life in this state but government will resist this and we call on the people to always report people living ostentatious life in their Communities to the Security Agencies for immediate action."

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