

Landmine blasts kill 10 in Borno



At least 10 people were killed in explosions targeting motorists on a highway in Borno State near the border with Cameroon where jihadists are active, anti-jihadist militia and residents told AFP, yesterday.

Jihadists from Boko Haram and an Islamic State-allied group have been driven back from swathes of territory they once controlled earlier in a 14-year-old conflict, but they still carry out ambushes and attacks in remote areas.

Early on Tuesday, seven people were killed when their flatbed truck carrying nine people hit a landmine suspected to have been planted by jihadists in Kunibaa village outside the town of Gamboru, the sources said.

"The truck exploded after rolling over a landmine just 15 km from Gamboru, killing seven people," Shehu Mada, anti-jihadist militia leader in Gamboru said.

Two passengers sitting on the tailboard escaped with minor injuries, said Usman Hamza, another militia who gave the same toll.

The victims included a woman and her two children heading to the regional capital Maiduguri for a wedding, said Babandi Abdullahi, a Gamboru resident. Abdullahi attended the burial of the woman and her two children as well as a fourth victim Tuesday afternoon.

On Monday, another three people were killed along the highway when a car and a truck conveying humanitarian aid to Gamboru hit landmines.

"The driver of the truck was killed and two passengers in the car were killed and others were injured, including the driver who lost a foot," said militia leader Umar Kachalla.

Troops patrolling the highway safely detonated three other explosives planted near the scene of the blasts, said Kachalla.

Idris Halilu, a bus driver who arrived at the scene after the incident, confirmed Kachalla's account.

The Gamboru to Maiduguri highway is a strategic 140-kilometre (87-mile) trade route in the region, and provides an important link with neighbouring Cameroon. The highway was reopened in July 2016 after it was shut by the military for two years due to incessant jihadist attacks.

Boko Haram and rival Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) still launch sporadic ambushes on convoys from their hideouts and plant landmines along the highway.

Related News

Privatize water sector, conduct fair LG polls, Ibeh charges Mbah

Global unemployment set to worsen in 2024 - UN

Harassment of NASS members: Kogi arrests six, calls for immediate prosecution

Landmine explosions on the highway have eased, but a recent uptick in blasts on the route has been source of security concern as it coincides with the frequent travels by state governor Babagana Zulum on the highway.

Zulum drove to Gamboru on Sunday to distribute aid supplies to residents.

Nigeria's jihadist violence has killed more than 40,000 people since 2009 and displaced around two million from their homes.