



9.30.13

NIGERIA | Boko Haram Attacks Escalate

Islamist sect Boko Haram has attacked a college, Christian settlement and a number of villages in the last fortnight, in an apparent escalation of attacks on civilian targets in the run-up to Nigeria's Independence Day on Oct. 1.

Over 40 students reportedly died when suspected Boko Haram gunmen attacked male hostels at the College of Agriculture in Gujba, a rural area approximately 31 miles south of the Yobe State capital, Damaturu in north eastern Nigeria, during the early hours of Sept. 30r. Survivors report that the gunmen, some of whom were dressed in military fatigues, killed several students in their beds, while others were forced outside, divided into groups, and then executed group by group. Those attempting to flee were also shot, and several classrooms were set ablaze. The overwhelming majority of victims were Muslims.

During the early hours of Sept. 26, Boko Haram gunmen attacked Garin Bawa, a Christian settlement in Nangere Local Government Area (LGA) of Yobe State, killing a pastor and two of his children, and burning down a church and five houses.

On the night of Sept. 25, six people were killed and four injured during an armed attack on the Fulatari Ward of Gamboru town in Ngala LGA, Borno State. According to Local Government Chairman Alhaji Modu Gana Sheriff, the gunmen returned the following evening and killed 21 people in Kanumburi Ward of Ganboru Town, wounding three others, including the Village Head. They subsequently chased medical officers away from the General Hospital in Gwoza, where some of the victims were receiving treatment, and burnt down three public schools in Izge-Bita. There are also reports of farmers and government officials fleeing the area, which is situated near the Gwoza Hills, where caves have long provided shelter for the insurgents.

At least 11 people died and several homes were razed when assailants armed with knives and guns attacked Zangang Village in Attakar Chiefdom, Kaura LGA in Kaduna State on Sept. 28, the third attack on this remote area this year. The majority of victims are said to have been young people on their way to farmlands. On Sept. 20, a 24-hour curfew was imposed on Kafanchan in the south of Kaduna State, and troops were drafted to the area, after a series of

unexplained or “secret” killings heightened ethno-religious tensions in the area.

Mervyn Thomas, Chief Executive of Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), said, “CSW’s thoughts and prayers are with all who lost loved ones or suffered injury in attacks that occurred last week. We are particularly appalled at Sunday’s massacre of innocent young men in Yobe Federal College of Agriculture, some of whom were murdered in their beds. Not only does this cruel and cowardly attack, which ended lives that would have been of benefit to Nigeria, constitute a national tragedy; it also marks a new low in the activities of Boko Haram. The group has clearly decided to circumvent the state of emergency by focusing on soft targets in remote rural areas, regardless of the religious background of victims. The Nigerian military must likewise recalibrate security arrangements to counter this brutal new reality. Such a recalibration would also assist in addressing attacks such as those that have occurred in Kaura LGA in Kaduna State, and that continue to occur in remote areas of Plateau State.”