

Many feared dead as multiple blasts rock Maiduguri

From Hamza Idris & Yahaya Ibrahim, Maiduguri

MANY people were feared dead as a result of multiple bomb blasts and shootings in some parts of Maiduguri yesterday.

Residents said they heard the sound of at least eight bomb blasts along Lawan Bukar ward, Hausari, Shehuri, Budun, Abbaganaram, Kawar Maila and Bagobiri areas of Maiduguri metropolis yesterday.

Most of the blasts were fol-

lowed by sporadic gunshots and some residents said operatives of the Joint Task Force had engaged some gunmen, suspected to be members of the Boko Haram.

Our correspondent who monitored the situation reports that trouble started around 4.30pm with a sound of a blast somewhere in Lawan Bukar ward, the area where most of the residents have fled their homes in the last two days.

"As I am talking to you now, all the routes leading to

our area and the neighborhoods have been blocked and security agents have fully mobilized," Habu Baba who lives close to Lawan Bukar ward told Daily Trust by phone.

Baba, who spoke to our correspondent around 7.45pm, said he was sure many people must have been killed in the ensuing crisis. "As I am talking to you now, the trouble is ongoing and nobody in our area is outside, more so there is curfew," he said.

One killed in attempted jailbreak in Lafia ...Female inmate raped

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

ANGRY inmates protesting insufficient meals served them by prisons authorities and other sundry problems attempted a jailbreak on the night of Monday, but armed prisons warders and policemen quickly drafted there stalled their escape.

The inmates, who went on rampage, first broke into offices within the facility where they forced open a safe, and carted undisclosed sum of money, officers and inmates who worked outside of the facility, said. They said the jail breakers also raped one of the two female inmates held at the facility.

The prisons warders and policemen trailed them, shooting sporadically for several minutes, until they contained the jailbreak which started at about 7:30pm.

It was difficult to ascertain the number of the inmates who went on the rampage in their escape attempt, but Daily Trust learnt that not

less than 50 of them were involved. The facility holds about 430 inmates, including the two female inmates.

Prisons authorities kept sealed lips when reporters asked questions yesterday, but sources at the facility which is located along Doma Road in Kilema area of Lafia, said one inmate was shot dead, while several others were left with gun injuries.

Officials at the facility refused to talk throughout the day, and even barred reporters from going near the gates. The Comptroller General of the Nigerian Prisons Service, Zakari Ohinoyi Ibrahim arrived at the facility in Lafia, during the morning hours for on-the-spot assessment of the facility, but he spoke to newsmen only later in the afternoon - about 1pm.

He ordered his men to allow journalists access to him, outside of the facility, for interview, during which he made denials on questions asked about the incident.