

Female bomber kills many at Maiduguri market

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A female suicide bomber yesterday at the Maiduguri Monday Market blew herself up and killed many unsuspecting traders and buyers, vigilantes and security sources said.

Dozens of people were also injured and valuable properties and merchandize destroyed. Different sources gave conflicting casualty figures but were unanimous in the fact that the attack was a suicide mission by a female suicide bomber who should be in her early twenties.

The incident happened around 4.30pm and caused serious confusion around the market while a deafening sound and a thick smoke attracted many sympathizers to the scene.

A senior security source said 18 people were killed, a vigilante member said 34 died while some volunteers who took part in the initial rescue operation said over 25 people lost their lives.

It was gathered that the suicide bomber hid three explosives under her hijab (veil) and approached a

busy entrance at the market which is popularly known as Shonekan Gate.

"She wanted to beat checks at the entrance and was very restless before the bomb exploded, Yakuma Shama, a vigilante member said.

"We recognize the female bomber by her head which is intact even though was severed from the rest of the body. We counted 34 dead bodies and over 50 others with serious injuries," he said.

Another vigilante, Musa Musa, said some of the dead bodies were evacuated before the arrival of Red Cross and NEMA officials. "Some of the dead bodies were beyond recognition while others died because of serious bleeding," he said.

A medical personnel at the State Specialist Hospital said 27 people with various injuries were receiving treatment, adding that those who died were taken to the mortuary.

"We don't have a precise figure of the number of people killed or injured because the victims have been taken to various hospitals," he said. The scene of the blast was a gory sight with blood spilling on the tarred road and a large crater at the scene of the point of the explosion.

Many people were killed on Saturday following simultaneous attacks at the Baga Fish Market, Monday Market and Borno Express Terminus which left over 70 people dead and 143 others injured.

A bomb which was concealed and dropped by the road at Babban Layi, another business hub along Hausari ward in Maiduguri was discovered and defused by security operatives before it exploded. Babban Layi is a centre for various businesses, including electronics, building and textile materials.

Similarly, some Boko Haram insurgents yesterday disguised as horsemen and ambushed travellers at Ngamdu, a village at the border between Borno and Yobe State and killed eight travellers, injured 12 and snatched some cars before they fled. Our correspondent saw some of the victims at the Umaru Shehu Hospital in Maiduguri where they are being treated.