

4 killed in Okene bomb explosion

From Tijani Labaran, Lokoja

Four persons were reportedly killed on Thursday when a bomb exploded near the palace of Ohinoyi of Ebirra Land, Alhaji Ado Ibrahim, at Okene in Kogi State.

The incident happened shortly before the arrival of President Muhammadu Buhari in Okene to inaugurate some legacy projects of Governor Yahaya Bello.

Controversies have continued to trail what actually happened with the state's Commissioner for Information, Kingsley Fanwo, saying it was an electric transformer that exploded.

But witnesses said it was a timed bomb hidden in a car and parked near the palace.

"Contrary to the blatant lie that there was a bomb explosion that killed three people in Okene, I wish to debunk the falsehood here.

"It was a mere transformer spark which injured one person. Mr President is currently enjoying the hospitality of our people right there at Okene where he is commissioning life-touching projects, executed by Governor Yahaya Bello," Fanwo said in a tweet which was later deleted.

A resident of the vicinity located along Dabras Hotel Road in Okene, Malam Abubakar Ahmed, said they

heard a loud noise near the second gate of the palace of the paramount ruler.

"The noise of the explosion was followed shortly by wailings and screaming from the neighbourhoods. Later, we saw soldiers moving toward the direction of the palace," he said.

A palace source told *Daily Trust* that he was inside his room when he heard the bomb explosion outside the palace.

When asked about the

well-being of the Ohinoyi of Ebiraland, Alhaji Ado Ibrahim, the source said the monarch was fine.

Another source said the perpetrators parked the car near the palace ahead of the president's arrival.

"The bomb was timed and gladly, there was a little delay on the scheduled time of the arrival of the president and it went off," he said.