

## IN-DEPTH

## How illegal miners' explosives wreaked havoc in Ibadan

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- UK returnee, 2 others dead; father, son missing
- Bola Ige's house shattered, ex-deputy gov homeless
- Tinubu, Afenifere, experts call for probe, prosecution

The ancient city of Ibadan is still reeling from the massive destruction caused by explosions that rocked the Oyo State's capital on Tuesday evening.

The state governor, Seyi Makinde, attributed the blast to the activities of illegal miners, whom he accused of storing explosive devices in one of the houses in Bodija.

No fewer than three persons were said to have died, 77 injured and more than 20 houses destroyed during the incident that occurred at Dejo Oyelese Street, Adeyi Avenue, in Bodija area of the city.

Daily Trust learnt that a returnee from the United Kingdom was among the casualties.

An eye witness, Hon Ayode Jajay, in a viral video circulating on the social media, claimed that the victim, who arrived from abroad last week was a son of one of the landlords in the estate.

"Look at the guy that just died, he just came from the UK about a week ago. He's a son to a landlord in this estate," he said.

A survivor, who simply identified himself as Adeleke, said he lost his elder brother, Oladipo to the incident.

The survivor, who spoke with a local broadcasting station, Lagelu FM, noted that they were at a hotel in the area playing tennis before his brother sought to go out to attend to something before the explosion caused a stir that sent a sharp object that gave him a deep cut in his stomach.

"He came out to the front of the transformer where the incident happened. His intestines were out after the cut," he said.

**Father, son, other residents missing as rescue operation continues**

Meanwhile, it was learnt that many residents, including a father and his son, are still missing following the explosion.

In a video from the scene of the incident, a man removed from the rubble was seen being stretchered by emergency responders into a waiting ambulance as some residents wailed over their missing relatives.

Some people were heard in the background urging the responders to quickly attend to the victim, saying he was still breathing.

"The children are at the UCH but we have not seen their dad," a middle-aged man said tearfully.

"I have people (trapped here). I am the painter working on buildings around here. The explosion occurred 10 minutes after I left here. I heard the sound of the explosion. The incident would have met me here if not because of a church programme I went for," he added.



■ Scene of an explosion in Ibadan

"My friend's number is no longer reachable. That (pointing at the scene) is his car under mine. I called him several times last night, but he didn't pick up. We are looking for him and his son. His house crumbled," a resident who escaped the explosion said.

Schools within the estate and its environs closed while many businesses were unopened.

**Governor's office, UCH, others affected**

The impact of the explosion also affected dozens of buildings in nearby areas such as Sango, Mokola, University College Hospital (UCH), Agodi and Ojoo. Other areas in Ibadan such as Eleiyale and Ologuneru also felt the impact of the explosion.

Buildings and offices within the State Secretariat Agodi Ibadan were not exempted from the impact.

Among the affected offices were the Office of the Governor, Governor's media office, Water Corporation Building that houses other ministries, the State Secretariat Central Mosque, the Secretariat Chapel, Revenue House, and the newly built and yet to be commissioned Local Government Service Commission, and the Local Government Staff Training School.

**Former deputy governor homeless, Bola Ige's house shattered**

One of the victims of the explosion, a former Deputy Governor of the State, Barr. Iyiola Oladokun said he has been rendered homeless due to the effect of the devastating blast.

He added that properties worth millions of naira were destroyed in his house.

Oladokun said, "I am one of the

residents of Dejo Oyelese Close. My house was affected.

"We were just watching the football match when the explosion occurred. All the doors that were closed were forced open.

"It was very devastating. All the doors, burglary, windows and even the roof have gone.

"We give glory to God that me and my wife were not hurt.

"I am just coming back now because we can't sleep here again. We had to find somewhere to sleep yesterday."

Daily Trust also learnt that the home of the governor of the state in the Second Republic, Chief Bola Ige was also affected.

**Govt relocates residents**

Meanwhile, the Oyo State government has relocated survivors of the explosion to Calton Gate and Palms 77 hotels located in the Agodi area of Ibadan.

The Commissioner for Information and Orientation, Prince Dotun Oyelade, said that temporary accommodation has been organised by the government for those displaced as a result of the explosion, while the state government will also put the hospital bills of those injured.

He also disclosed that the state has established a Situation Hub, located within the premises of the State Housing Corporation, near Bodija Islamic Centre, Ibadan, for victims of the blast.

He advised victims to submit verifiable evidence of their losses and seek clarifications on the nature of government intervention.

The commissioner also confirmed that several victims have started registering at the hub, and are being put through by emergency and disaster experts.

The Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Inclusion, Mrs Toyin Balogun, who spoke with Daily Trust at the site of the incident urged victims to access the free medical intervention of the state governor.

According to her, the University College Hospital (UCH), Tristate, Bethel and Redeemer's Hospitals are the designated treatment centres for the victims.

**I dead, six hospitalised at UCH**

When Daily Trust correspondent visited UCH, it was learnt seven out of the 14 patients in the facility have been discharged while six others are still on admission. One victim was said to have been brought in dead.

The Chief Medical Director of the Hospital, Prof Jesse Abiodun Otegbayo, said resources have been mobilised to meet the urgent healthcare needs of the victims as well as the activation of a trauma response team that will implement comprehensive measures to ensure that every patient receives prompt and compassionate care.

The hospital in a statement by its Public Relations Officer, Funmi Adetuyibi, added that the facility suffered damages from the impact of the blast.

"Unfortunately, too, the hospital had a lot of its facilities damaged by the effects of the blast (Medical Museum, School of Nursing, Molecular Laboratory, Bulk Store, Ogunlesi Hall, Hospital Clinics, among others). On behalf of the management, Staff, Students, and our teeming patients, the hospital is appealing to well-meaning individuals and corporate organisations to come to her aid to be able to sustain and upscale healthcare delivery at this time and

beyond," it said.

At Bethel Hospital, an admin staff member, Miss Gift Olorunmbi confirmed to Daily Trust that only one of the victims, an elderly woman was brought to the facility.

**How foreign miners ran out of house before explosion - survivor**

Meanwhile a survivor, Alhaji Mohammed Musa, who lived next to the house where the explosion took place, alleged that foreign illegal miners have been living in the neighborhood since 2013. He said they ran out of the house before the explosion.

"The foreigners have been living here since 2013. They go in the morning and come back in the evening. I wouldn't know if their immediate neighbour knows they are into mining. The foreigners ran out before the explosion," he said.

He said that he noticed that the miners and their children ran out of the house immediately they saw the raging fire, without informing neighbours of the impending dangers.

"They, including their children, ran out of the house and they didn't alert us so that we could run away too. They knew the implications when they saw the fire. Thank God I came down trying to help put out the fire. I would have been dead by now.

"The whole house would have collapsed on me. I wanted to save the house of my neighbour from being burnt. That's what saved me. If anyone had been in the house, the person would have gone," he added.

**Those responsible for Ibadan explosion must be published - Tinubu**

President Tinubu has said those behind what he called "The inexcusable and reckless behaviour" that led to the devastating explosion that occurred on Tuesday night in Ibadan, the Oyo State capital must be fished out and punished.

The president, in a statement yesterday by his spokesman, Ajuri Ngelale, expressed sadness over the explosion.

"It is worrisome that the cause of the blast is being attributed to the activities of illegal miners. Those behind the inexcusable and reckless behaviour that has created the conditions for the sad incident to occur must be fished out and punished," he said.

Meanwhile, the Federal Executive Council (FEC) has constituted a committee to review the laws guiding the control of explosives in the country to determine whether they were violated by illegal miners whose activities led to Tuesday's deadly explosion in Ibadan.

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