

# 8 die, 20 injured as man burns Kano mosque over inheritance tussle



■ Inside the burnt mosque

From Salim Umar Ibrahim, Kano

A family dispute over the sharing of inheritance has led to grief and death in the quiet community of Larabar-Albasawa on the outskirts of Gezawa, headquarters of Gezawa Local Government Area of Kano State.

Eight people were confirmed dead and more than 20 are now at the Murtala Muhammad Specialist Hospital, Kano after 38-year-old Shafiu Abubakar set a mosque on fire while worshippers were observing the early morning prayer at about 5.30am.

Sources at the village told the Daily Trust correspondent that Shafiu sprayed the mosque area with petroleum, locked the door and set it on fire trapping about 40 worshippers inside.

A family feud, which started as a result of inheritance distribution between the members, took a new turn with more problems and unrest among the siblings and affecting the larger community members.

Our correspondent, who visited the village, reports that the entire community was in confusion as families grieved over relations caught up in the incident.

Members of households were seen in groups grieving over the unfortunate incident that greeted them early in the morning in the community. It was gathered that almost every household had a member affected.

Three elderly men were seen shedding tears claiming that their friends and relations were now battling for their lives in hospital.

"We are the only ones left among our friends God will surely punish whoever did this to us. This is indeed a calamity," they said as they wept.

According to another member of the community who asked not to be named, "the man used petrol and started a fire while the people, about 40 of them were praying, and locked the mosque."

"It took time for people outside to be aware of the incident and immediately went to the rescue of the people who were struggling to get out of the mosque which had caught fire."

At least 28 victims who were seriously



■ Residents converged at the scene of the incident



■ Elders of the community mourning

burnt were said to have been rushed to Murtala Muhammad Specialist Hospital for treatment.

Speaking, another resident, Ibrahim Jibrin said: "I was about to go to the mosque when I saw a boy running engulfed in fire shouting for help and that's when we got aware of the situation."

"We don't know what is happening but this is the third time he is attacking people here. He had once hit two of his elder brothers and took himself to the

police station claiming that he had killed them."

He added that the incident is related to years of misunderstanding among the family members.

Although some residents confirmed to our reporter that there has been a dispute over the sharing of inheritance among members of the suspect's family, no one could say the nature of the dispute.

In addition, most of the members of the suspect's family, who could have

explained the situation were caught up in the fire incident and are receiving treatment in hospital.

Meanwhile, the suspect, according to the residents has submitted himself to the police at Gezawa.

At the Murtala Muhammad Specialist Hospital at Kofar Mata, where the victims were admitted, our correspondent reports a somber scene as relatives waited to know the fate of those who sustained various degrees of burns.

Salisu Isah, a caregiver and relative of one of the victims told Daily Trust that he was shocked when he received the news of the incident.

"This incident is a testament to the high level of lawlessness in our society."

"Now the government will not do anything about it. He will only be taken to the court after interrogation by security operatives and the matter will just die like that."

Meanwhile, the police have confirmed the death of eight people following the tragic incident while a number of others are receiving treatment.

AIG Umar Mammam Sanda made this known when he led a delegation of security personnel, including the Commissioner of Police in the State and the Director DSS, on a visit to the victims at Murtala Muhammad Specialist Hospital.

He said: "What happened is not associated with any act of terrorism but rather, it was a skirmish that arose as a result of inheritance sharing."

"The suspect was said to be not satisfied with the distribution and was reacting to that. He is presently with us and is giving useful information. It is really unfortunate. He used a locally made bomb to commit the crime."

Meanwhile, residents have continued to express their concerns over the tragic event.

"When they don't punish murderers and similar offenders appropriately, these heinous acts will persist," Shamsu Abdullahi, a resident, said.

Another resident, Abdullahi Uba, called on the relevant authorities to investigate the issues relating to the inheritance thoroughly.

"May God heal the wounded victims. But investigation should be conducted deeply so as to get to the root of the case. Since the members of his family and also those that participated in the inheritance distribution were there, there must be something."

Another resident, Faruk Sani, also faulted the situation where the distribution of inheritance is being delayed unnecessarily, especially at a time when people are struggling to survive.

"Honestly, to avoid this kind of issue, people need to share the inheritance in time and stop holding one's entitlement because it's creating serious problems."

"Normally we are in the habit of doing that and mostly the younger ones don't find it easy to understand. So, everyone should be given what is his or hers."

Daily Trust reports that in a typical traditional setting, a family member entitled to inheritance as a result of the death of his parents at a youthful age usually goes through a superior member of the family to manage it until he is judged to be capable of running his affairs.