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Policeman dies in attempt to defuse bomb

WEDNESDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2012 00:00

FROM SAXONE AKHAINE (KADUNA) AND IYABO LAWAL (IBADAN)

NEWS - NATIONAL

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THE dire state of the nation's security system was again exposed yesterday in Kaduna where two bombs went off at separate locations in the capital city of Kaduna State.

The first explosion occurred near the Ungwa Sarki Market opposite the Kaduna State Transport Authority (KSTA) motor park housing the state transport offices and loading units. Several people were injured in the incident.

The second explosion, in which a policeman serving in the police anti-bomb squad died, occurred close to the Sultan Bello Mosque in Ungwar Sarki.

According to eyewitnesses, shortly after the first bomb exploded, a polythene bag containing "moving substances" was discovered at another location about 500 metres away from the first blast.

One eyewitness told reporters that the dead policeman showed bravery by trying to detonate the content of the polythene. Unfortunately, the content exploded, killing the policeman instantly.

When The Guardian visited the scene of the blast, the remains of the dead policeman were strewn on the road.

The scene was later barricaded by a combined team of armed policemen and soldiers, which caused heavy traffic jam as residents made frantic efforts to flee the area.

Following the blasts, traders at the Ungwa Sarki market quickly locked up their shops while schools and financial institutions around the area also closed abruptly. Travellers at the KSTA motor park also fled later in search of another motor park.

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer of Kaduna Police Command, Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Aminu Lawan, confirmed the incident.

Lawan stated: "Our officer was affected while trying to defuse the explosives. He lost his life in the process. We have started a thorough search of the entire area to ensure that another explosive is not planted around there while further investigation will be carried out."

In statement, Kaduna State Commissioner of Police, Bala Nasarawa, stated: "Today, February 14, 2012 at about 1040 and 1045 hours respectively, there were two explosions that occurred at Ungwar Sarki Bus Stop Kaduna. The first Improvised Explosive Device (IED) exploded in a gutter near a parked 15-seater bus. No one was affected. The second explosion occurred when a police anti-bomb personnel, one Sergeant Sunday Badang, was about to detonate it. The improvised explosive device exploded and he was killed instantly.

"The fragment affected two other persons near the scene. They were rushed to 44 Army Reference Hospital in Kaduna for treatment and the victims are in stable condition. The area was equally swept by the police anti-bomb squad and no other explosive device was detected.

"We have beefed up security in the entire state and members of the public are advised to report any suspicious object to security agencies and to avail us with credible information that will nip in the bud these criminalities".

Meanwhile, youths in the Ungwa Sarki have pledged to join forces with the security agencies to fish out perpetrators of the dastardly act.

One of them who spoke with reporters on condition of anonymity stated: "We are not happy with the situation and we will assist the police in bringing out those linked with the blast once identified. We are tired of bomb explosion every now and then killing innocent people."

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20/02/12 12:17

In a related development, Vice Chairman, Senate Committee on National Planning, Economic Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, Olufemi Lanlehin, yesterday stated that the Boko Haram insurgency posed a dangerous threat to the unity and continued existence of the Nigerian nation.

Consequently, he charged the Federal Government to check the sect's activities without further delay.

Lanlehin, who represents Oyo South Senatorial District, expressed concern over the increased spate of bombings by the Islamic sect and warned of grave dangers ahead if the banned group was not checked.

The lawmaker, who spoke with reporters in Ibadan after inspecting ongoing solar automated borehole project for residents of his senatorial district, said the National Assembly had invited security chiefs in the country for questioning on their preparedness to arrest the insurgency.

Lanlehin stated: "Boko Haram is condemnable and I believe that every right thinking human being will condemn the sect because it is against humanity. I appeal to the Federal Government to rise up to the occasion and make sure that the sect is completely flushed out of existence before it destroys the peace and unity of our dear country.

"Some of the key participants have been apprehended and efforts to arrest other members of the gang are very encouraging, but there is still more to be done to save the country from disintegration."

The senator also faulted those against the convocation of a Sovereign National Conference (SNC), saying there was nothing wrong in having the conference in as much as it would bring out good recommendations that would further strengthen the unity of the country.

Lanlehin stated that the recommendations at the proposed conference would contribute greatly to the planned amendment of the nation's Constitution, which the Senate is currently working on.

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Author of this article: **From Saxone Akhaine (Kaduna) and Iyabo Lawal (Ibadan)**

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#3 agbobu 2012-02-15 20:58

Mr Jonathan name and go after the boko harm very big fishes, from the north in PDP, ACN, CPC, the security forces, the military and in the traditional institutions. You and your government know them. What are you afraid of or you have no guts or you have a hidden agenda. One day all will be exposed.

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#2 agbobu 2012-02-15 19:57

Why this unnecessary waste of Nigerian lives? Yet Mr Jonathan and his government believe that the status quo ante must be kept.

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#1 jogbeni 2012-02-15 08:45

In this era of terrorism, Nigeria should provide the right equipment so that bomb disposal experts do not need to die in this manner. I am really saddened by the death of this gallant police man. This is a wake up call to our security planners and policy makers.

John Ogbeni
[UK]

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