

The acting Police Public Relations Officer of the Kaduna State Command, Mr. Abubakar Balteh, who was away in Abuja for a seminar, could not comment on the matter.

And less than 24 hours after a suicide-tricycle bomber attacked the Joint Task Force (JTF) military patrol vehicle at the Customs area of Maiduguri metropolis in Borno State, two gunmen yesterday attacked another military post at the Nganaram Bus Stop at 4.00 a.m.

The soldiers, according to a resident, engaged the gunmen in exchange of gunfire for an hour.

Confirming the incident in Maiduguri, spokesman of JTF, Lt. Col. Sagir Musa, said the two gunmen were killed and a Kalashnikov rifle recovered from them.

The area, he added, had been cordoned to prevent further attacks and killings.

Maku said apart from the fact that Nigeria and Pakistan are building one common market and raising economic relations, "we are seeking a partnership with Pakistan in this regard. We have a lot to learn in terms of dealing with internal security challenges. Given our similar circumstance, what we need to do today is to come together and share experiences in peace building. Humanity shares common aspirations."

The minister, who was flanked by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Martin Uhomoibhi, said Pakistan (a nuclear holding power) and Turkey, had emerged as the twin examples of Muslim societies that the rest of the world can do business with without fear of a religious overhang.

Earlier, the Acting High Commissioner of Pakistan to Nigeria, Ahmed Ali Sirohey, said his country wants to urgently sign a trade and investment treaty with Nigeria to take co-operation from the level of talks to concrete action. He also disclosed that Pakistani ministers would be coming to Nigeria next month for an investment exploratory and trade mission.

Abubakar, who is the President-General of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA), said the present security challenges facing the country would become a thing of the past if all Nigerians unite to address them rather than indulge in unnecessary name-calling.

The monarch, who spoke on Wednesday night when he hosted journalists to a special Ramadan dinner, said that stakeholders have been working hard in the last seven months to tackle what he described as insurgent and return the country to normalcy.

He lamented that despite the assurances of Muslim leaders to the contrary, some Nigerians still go about saying that Muslims were out to forcefully Islamise Nigeria.

He said that it was unfair to distrust them even after quoting from the Holy Quran that there was no compulsion in Islam.

"We are very honest, sincere and straightforward people. Islam is not being treated as religion of peace, even when we have told people what the religion is all about."

According to him, different types of Boko Haram have now been identified in Nigeria, including political Boko Haram and economic Boko Haram and that there was nothing wrong in calling a bad man by his name but he frowned at the situation where his religion is joined to his crime and labelled as such.

He said that just as a pastor would not be called a Christian rapist for having an unlawful carnal knowledge of a small girl, it is only fair that the Muslims involved in acts of terrorism should simply be called terrorists and not Islamic terrorists.

The Islamic leader said that he was very sensitive to such unfair and blanket labelling of Islam hence he hardly spoke these days and preferred the option of issuing statements through the secretary-general of NSCIA.

The Sultan praised recent peace moves in Plateau State, citing the statement made by Governor David Jang when he visited flood victims and statements by the likes of Chief Solomon Lar and urged all stakeholders not to be discouraged by negative people who were trying to scuttle their efforts.

He urged Muslims to ensure that they continue to promote the peace and unity of the nation as they celebrate the end of Holy month of Ramadan.

Abubakar asked Muslims in the North to be security conscious as they celebrate Eid-el Fitri and commiserated with the

recent victims of attacks in Maiduguri, Damaturu in Yobe and Gombe.

In a statement issued by the JNIGER Secretary-General, Dr. Khalid Abubakar Aliyu, pointed out that the Sultan "felicitates with the Muslim Ummah in Nigeria over the coming end of the Ramadan fast", stressing that "indeed this is a pointer to us all to reflect on our actions and inactions.

"Therefore, Muslims are called upon to give Zakat-ul-fitr (ordained alms giving at the end of Ramadan fast) preferably, two days before the Eid-el-Fitri, but not later than morning of the Eid day.

Also, the House of Representatives Committee on National Security and Intelligence has called on the Nigeria Police, the State Security Service (SSS) and all other security agencies to ensure adequate security during the Sallah celebrations.

In a statement made available to reporters in Abuja yesterday, its chairman, Bello Mutawalle (PDP, Zamfara), said: "I call on the various security agencies to step up their efforts in the ongoing fight against terrorism and crime, especially during the Sallah celebrations. They must, as a matter of necessity, restore hope and confidence among Nigerians.

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| | | |
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| Thu | Fri | Sat |
| Mostly Cloudy | Scattered T-Storms | Scattered T-Storms |

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| 29C | 27C | 28C |
| Thu | Fri | Sat |
| Mostly Cloudy | PM T-Storms | Scattered T-Storms |

PORT HARCOURT WEATHER

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| | | |
| 31C | 28C | 28C |
| Thu | Fri | Sat |
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