

## NEWS.

# Two female bombers, three others killed in Kano blasts

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- **Jonathan condemns attacks**
- **Military seizes explosives in truck conveying cattle**

TRAGEDY overshadowed festivities marking the end of Ramadan in Kano Monday as two female suicide bombers blew themselves up, killing three persons and injuring 10 others, bringing the number of attacks this week in the metropolis to five.

In a related development, the military on Sunday intercepted Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) which were concealed in a truck conveying cattle from Baga and arrested 15 suspects in connection with the crime.

Meanwhile, two displaced persons from Shaffa community in Hawul council of Borno State were on Sunday killed by suspected Boko Haram gunmen.

Similarly, President Goodluck Jonathan has condemned the recent terrorist attacks in Kano and Adamawa States as well as the kidnap of the Lamido of Kolofata in Northern Cameroun, Lamido Seini Lamine and the wife of the Vice Prime Minister of Cameroun.

Also, Governor Ibrahim Gaidam of Yobe State yesterday called on traditional and religious leaders and residents in the state to "fully co-operate" with the military and other security agencies in the state in the war against insurgency.

In the same vein, Rivers State Governor, Chibuike Amaechi, has said that those who kill and maim their fellow humans and destroy properties of Muslims during the holy month of Ramadan are not Muslims.

Minister of State for Education, Nyesom Wike, has expressed optimism that the prevailing security challenges in the country will soon be a thing of the past.

One of the blasts occurred when a woman detonated low-calibre explosives packed to her torso at a petrol station in the Hotoro area on the outskirts of the city, targeting women who had lined up to buy kerosene, Kano State Police Spokesman, Musa Magaji Majia told Agence France Presse (AFP).

He added that 10 victims were rushed to the hospital after the blast that went off at roughly 10:30 a.m. and that three had died.

Hotoro area resident, Shehu Mudi said he saw burning jerry cans and ambulances carting away victims minutes after the blast.

About three hours after the petrol station blast, another female bomber approached the Trade Fair Complex in a key commercial district, according to Kano State Police Commissioner Aderele Shinaba.

She was stopped at the gate and blew herself up, he added.

"It was the same modus operandi," Shinaba said. "Six people were injured, including two (police) officers."

According to a military source in Maiduguri yesterday, the arrested suspects had allegedly disguised as cattle merchants from Camerounian border areas of Borno State and travelling to either Onitsha or Port Harcourt.

The source added the intercepted IEDs could have been "very devastating," if detonated, stressing, "we thank God for making us intercept the truck loaded with explosives and aimed at destroying lives."

An Shaffa resident, Yamtara Bata, said in a telephone interview yesterday that the insurgents fled after slashing the throats of their victims.

"We have no soldiers here to protect us, as we are left in the hands of God for protection, but the gunmen last night killed our people by slashing their throats," Bata added.

Another resident, Isa Yakubu also told The Guardian that the gunmen had earlier warned Shaffa residents, including the traditional ruler (name withheld) to desist from accommodating displaced persons from Damboa, stating that the residents risked being attacked if they continue to harbour fleeing neighbours.

It was also learnt that the gunmen before fleeing Shaffa told residents that they (terrorists) have vowed to hunt for any fleeing Damboa residents, alleging that the people of Damboa are their enemies who were against their mission.

However, efforts to contact the State Police Public Relations Officer, Gideon Jibrin failed at press time, but a reliable security source confirmed the incident.

In his Sallah message to the people of Yobe State, Gaidam said terrorism and the activities of Boko Haram sect cannot be overcome without the full cooperation of the people and their leaders.

The statement by the governor's Special Adviser on Public Affairs and Information, Abdullahi Bego, added: "The Ramadan fasting that we have observed over the last one month has been truly edifying experience which has taught us a lot of lessons. It has instilled in us discipline by bringing our passion under control, illuminating our souls by raising our spiritual consciousness and above all, removed the false sense of pride by reminding us of our basic human imperfections.

He further noted: "This occasion therefore affords us the opportunity for sober reflection and an assessment of our conducts and our endeavours to conform to the teachings of the noble Qur'an and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. On our part, I wish to reassure our citizens that our administration will continue to focus in making life more meaningful to all our good people."

On insecurity to lives and property in the State, Gaidam said: "Let me use this opportunity to remind all our citizens that the quests for a more meaningful development and societal progress can only be achieved if all our people live in peace, for from peace comes happiness which will no doubt facilitate achievement of a more prosperous, united, disciplined, just and egalitarian society."

He added: "In consideration of the security challenges which we have experienced over the past three years, I wish to call on our people continue to cooperate with the security operatives and to always give them valuable information on the movement of suspicious individuals and groups.

"I also call upon all stakeholders particularly the royal fathers, community leaders, religious preachers, vigilante groups, youth groups, civil society organisations and indeed all patriotic citizens to co-operate and join hands to stamp out all threats to security, peace and order all together in our societies.

Amaechi deplored insurgency while addressing a cross-section of the Muslim community in the State who visited him in Government House, Port Harcourt as part of activities to celebrate this year's Eid-el-Fitri yesterday.

Represented by his deputy, Tele Ikuru, Amaechi urged Muslims in the country to use the occasion of the Eid-el-Fitri to unite against terrorists and other extremists who hide under the Islam religion to perpetrate violence, thereby bringing the holy religion to disrepute.

While receiving a delegation of Muslims in Rivers State, who visited him in his house in Port Harcourt, said Nigerians should use the end of the Ramadan fasting to pray to God to continue to protect and save Nigeria from the scourge of terrorism. He also urged Nigerians to pray for the president to be able to tackle the security challenge facing the country.

In a statement by his Special Adviser on Media, Dr Reuben Abati, Jonathan described as shocking, callous and reprehensible the multiple bomb blasts that occurred in Kano within 24 hours, and the unrelenting

attacks by the Boko Haram at a time the Muslim faithful are observing the holy festival of Eid el Fitri.

He commiserated with the families of all those who lost their loved ones in the Kano and Adamawa attacks and wishes the injured speedy recovery.

President Jonathan further noted that the deployment of young women as suicide bombers represents a new low in the inhuman campaign by these terrorists and an expression of utter disregard for the dignity of the female gender as well as a wicked exploitation of the girl-child.

The President stated that the abduction of the Lamido of Kolofata and the wife of the Vice premier of Cameroon clearly underscores the regional security threat that Boko Haram has become.

He lauded the recent resolve by the Defence Ministers of Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, Benin and Niger to further strengthen existing partnerships in order to forestall the desperate attempt by misguided elements to turn the sub-region into a battleground for terrorism and radical extremism.