

Retrieved explosives kill 63 in Borno State

• STF shoots two Plateau women to death

From Isa Abdulsalami Ahovi (Jos) and Njadvara Musa (Maiduguri)

FURTHER tragedy struck the nation yesterday from an unlikely source as a bag full of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), discovered by youth vigilance group at a Boko Haram abandoned camp near Monguno village in Borno State, accidentally set off, killing no fewer than 63 people.

Similarly, men of the Special Task Force (STF) in Plateau State yesterday killed two women as they protested against the roadblock newly mounted at Haipang village and Barkin Ladi town.

Natives had protested against attempts to restore roadblock in the area. It was learnt that the soldiers abandoned the plan on Tuesday following the intervention of the Chairman of Barkin Ladi local council, Dr. Emmanuel Loman, and other community leaders, who came to the scene when the natives and soldiers had a disagreement as roadblock was being mounted.

The soldiers were said to have resurfaced yesterday determined to do what they said they had been directed to and prevent untoward happenings like cattle rustling and other acts of criminality and terrorism.

When the protest was mobilised again, the soldiers were said to have dispersed the crowd but one of them went after the two women, who had gone to their shops, and shot them, killing one instantly while the other later died in the hospital.

Reacting yesterday, STF Spokesman, Capt. Ikedichi Iweha, said that in compliance with instructions, some amendments to the checkpoints were noted, especially along the Barkin Ladi axis, noting: "Some checkpoints have been removed, some have been adjusted. It is in line with this instruction that some ad-

justments were being made along that Barkin Ladi axis."

However, "as men of the STF were trying to disperse them (protesters), gunshots were heard from the corners of the fence. It was the confusion that arose from that that led to the unfortunate shooting of the women, who I understand were taken to the hospital."

Military sources and local residents said yesterday in Maiduguri that the multiple explosions, which occurred at about 5p.m on Tuesday, left over four-dozen others injured.

An eyewitness and member of the vigilance group, Haruna Bukar, told *The Guardian* that members of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) patrolling the Monguno-Marte Road stumbled on a bag containing metallic substances at an the Islamist terrorist group, *Boko Haram*, once camped at before being dislodged by the military last February.

"When they found the bag containing what later turned out improvised explosives, they brought it to Monguno town, where people gathered to take a look.

"As they were busy fiddling with the contents of the bag, the bombs went off with a massive blast that killed about 63 persons and injured dozen others. Most of those affected are young men and a few females," he said.

An officer of the group in Maiduguri, Mallam Abbas Gava, also confirmed the incident, saying: "Initially, we thought it was a *Boko Haram* attack as it was being rumoured in Maiduguri town."

Loman explained: "There was a checkpoint at Haipang before, mounted by the MOPOL. The STF came in four Hilux vehicles and they were mounting a new checkpoint. The people there said they don't want the military to mount a checkpoint there.

"One of their arguments was that there was an attack at Haipang in the past when people were killed and military ID cards were found there.

"The people in Barkin Ladi raised an eyebrow that the same military killed people at Haipang and the government did not do anything, and now they are bringing the military, who went to Haipang the day before and were embarrassing the people that they were looking for Fulani cows."

nou (left), Secretary-General of
y of Communication Technology,
(NCC), Dr. Okechukwu Itanyi,

big caps slide

Recent weak demand from offshore investors, since JP Morgan's 'threat' to delist Nigeria from its local currency government bond indices weighs appetite. "We expect local currency bond yields to rise, in line with the current short-term inflation trend and consequent depreciation on bond prices," said research analysts at Lagos-based Cowry Asset Management Limited.

The Debt Management Office (DMO) was billed to hold its monthly auction of FGN bonds in a targeted raise of N80 billion yesterday.

The DMO will issue N40 billion (15.54 per cent February 2020 (five year), N15.22 billion (14.20 per cent March 2024 (10-year), and N25 billion (12.149 per cent July 2034 (20-year) worth of bonds (all re-openings).

await trial in Delta

Prisons

number, and we will find a way to work with you (judiciary) to rehabilitate those released during prison visits by engaging and training them through our job creation committee. But it is also important that they have a new mindset to reintegrate into the society."

Commending the judges for their integrity in the dispensation of justice, the governor charged them to continue being fair and just in their actions as people look up to them as role mod-

els. He further promised to look into their requests and provide enabling environment for them to function efficiently.

Umukoro had earlier called for synergy on the rehabilitation and re-integration of those he would likely release during his planned visit to the prisons.

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The government is God's servant, working for your good. But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid. The government has the right to carry out the death sentence. It is God's servant, an avenger to execute God's anger on anyone who does what is wrong. Therefore, it is necessary for you to obey, not only because you're afraid of God's anger but also because of your own conscience. [Romans 13:4-5 ...GW]. Email Add: morojurere@yahoo.com