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Daily Independent (Lagos)

Nigeria: Suleja Church Bombed; Four Killed, Many Injured - Two Soldiers Injured in Borno Blast

Chinwendu Nnadozie. Sola Shittu And Abdulkareem Haruna

10 July 2011

Recommander

2 personnes recommandent ça. Soyez le premier parmi vos amis.

Maiduguri/Minna/Abuja — Four persons were killed and several others injured in a bomb blast on Sunday in Suleja, Niger State, the third such explosion in four months.



And Boko Haram detonated another bomb in

Maiduguri, a few hours after two soldiers were injured in an explosion accompanied by a shoot-out on Saturday night.

In turn, 11 of the sect members were killed. An eyewitness, Sunday Joseph, said the blast in Suleja, which affected the All Christian Fellowship Mission and Faith Mission Church on Church Road - where most churches in the city are concentrated - occurred at about 2 p.m. when several had ended the Sunday service.

One of those killed was a 51-year-old woman and mother of four, Theresa Ogbor. Her husband, Mr. Ogbor, confirmed her death to Daily Independent.

The corpses are at the Suleja General Hospital mortuary, and the injured, including a







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European United Left Nordic Green Left www.guengl.eu member of the church, a man who lost two legs, are receiving treatment at the Gwagwalada Specialist Hospital, Abuja.

Several churches had ended service at the time of the blast, but some members stayed back to hold meetings.

Business activities came to a halt as traders at the IBB Main Market hurriedly closed when news of the blast and the confusion it created filtered into the market.

∆dChoiree Ì>

Residents are in panic. Some major streets are deserted. Effiong Bassey, the Suleja Divisional Police Officer (DPO), said the attack was premeditated.

"No arrest has been made yet and there is no information as to who was behind the attack, but investigation has commenced." he added.

It was learnt that the attackers threw the bomb into the church premises from a refuse dump behind the building.

The impact affected five other houses on the street.

The first bomb blast in Suleja this year occurred on March 3 during a Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) rally, the second was at the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) secretariat on April 15, the day before the National Assembly (NASS) election.

Several persons died in both blasts, others were injured. The Niger State Government described the latest attack as wicked.

A statement issued by Governor Babangida Aliyu's Deputy Chief Press Secretary, Bala Bitrus, appealed to residents to remain calm as the security agencies will fish out the perpetrators. Ads by Google

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He condoled with the bereaved families, and pledged that the government will not be intimidated by the agents of destabilisation who derive joy in creating chaos.

At exactly 8 a.m. on Sunday in Maiduguri, Boko Haram detonated a bomb, hours after another blast accompanied a gun exchange on Saturday night, in which two soldiers on patrol in the Kalarin suburb of London Chiki in the city were injured.

In reaction to the attacks on Saturday night, the Joint Task Force (JTF) killed 11 Boko Haram members in a gun battle that sent the residents of Kalari packing.





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The residents alleged on Sunday that about 30 civilians were killed in a reprisal by angry soldiers, who they said also burnt homes and cars.

But a statement issued by the JTF countered that the buildings were destroyed by the bombs detonated by Boko Haram.

It drew the attention of the general public to the danger of allowing residential and business premises to be used by the sect, "as was experienced in London Chiki" on Saturday.

The statement recounted that, "At about 7:30 p.m., a patrol team of the JTF was attacked at Kalarin in the London Chiki area of Maiduguri metropolis with improvised explosive devices (IED) and several gunshots from a bus parked at a building.

"The attack was successfully repelled by members of the JTF and 11 members of the sect were killed while two members of the JTF were injured. Some buildings and vehicles were, however, destroyed by the IED.

"The JTF is aware that some members of the general public have prior information on attacks on security agencies and willingly allow their premises to be used for such acts without reporting to the security agencies.

"The public is again reminded of the implication of such collaboration as it will be dealt with appropriately."

The JTF added that a bomb targeted at its patrol vehicles on Sunday exploded around Ramat Square area, but no casualty was recorded.

It assured the public of its commitment to restore order in Borno State and urged law abiding residents to go about their normal businesses.

Mallam Yau, a resident of Kalari, told journalists that, "We could not sleep last night because of the bomb blast and gunshots.

"Many people were killed, and many houses and cars were set ablaze during the battle by some people we saw wearing military uniforms. We have seen death, we have seen bloodletting, and many of us left our homes this morning.

"We are in pain, we are between the devil and the deep blue sea, because neither Boko Haram nor the JTF is making our lives safe."

An aged woman in Kalari village said one Adamu Abdullahi, an employee of the University of Maiduguri (UNIMAID), whose burnt house was still smouldering on Sunday morning, was killed when he was "trying to turn back upon sighting his house

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"His car, which over there, hit the wall of the house of his neighbour, then he was shot and his car set ablaze.

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"His corpse was not picked until this morning when his relatives came and took it away."

African Culture

Over 2,000 residents of Kalari and other parts of London-Chiki have deserted their homes.

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"We are on our way to our village for now; this madness is enough," said Maryam Habu, who left the battle zone with her two kids.

Zimbabwe Government

Several churches did not hold services on Sunday. Soldiers ordered worshippers to return to their homes as they fired gunshots into the air.

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