



Gunmen kill DPO, two soldiers, eight others in Bauchi

By Patience Ogbodo
Correspondent (Bauchi),
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ELEVEN people were killed on Sunday morning when suspected armed robbers attacked an old generation bank in the Tafawa Balewa Local Government area of Bauchi State, just as three bomb explosions rocked two churches in the Bauchi metropolis.

Addressing a press conference at the state police command headquarters in company of the Brigade Commander, 33 Artillery Brigade of the Nigerian Army, Robinson Agbo, a Brigadier-General, and the state Director of the State Security

- Hoodlums burn ex-militant's home, kill policeman
- 10 bombs recovered, six suspects arrested

Service (SSS), the Police Commissioner, Ikechukwu Aduba, said two military personnel, a Deputy Superintendent of Police and eight civilians lost their lives during the attack.

According to Aduba, when the robbers launched the attack on the bank in Tafawa Balewa they were repelled by a combined team of military and police personnel deployed in the area.

Aduba said when confronted by the superior firepower of the

ACN raises alarm over plan to hand maritime security to private firm

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security men, the hoodlums retreated and that on their way they attacked a military checkpoint at Bununu District of the local government, a hotel in the town, a police station and a bank, killing the Divisional Police Officer (DPO), DSP Adeleke, an Army Lance Corporal and eight civilians.

The gunmen also on their escape route from Tafawa Balewa attacked a combined team of police/military personnel at a checkpoint at Mararraba Liman Katagun in Bauchi Local Government Area of the state, where they killed a military personnel during an exchange of gunfire.

Aduba disclosed that 10 unexploded improvised explosive devices (IEDs) were recovered at the scene of crime, while security agents arrested six people.

"They are currently helping us to tidy up our investigations, while efforts have been intensified to round up the fleeing hoodlums," the police boss

said. Meanwhile, three bomb explosions occurred at two churches in Bauchi metropolis with some damages done to them.

The churches attacked were the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA) 2 at the Railway Area and Our Lady of St Lauretto Catholic Church, Fadaman Mada.

The police commissioner said the exploded IEDs at the

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PDP cancels Bayelsa governorship rally

• Sylva asks INEC to seek vacation of court order

By Joe Nwankwo and Rotimi Akinwumi, Abuja

PEOPLES Democratic Party (PDP) has been forced to suspend indefinitely its planned 'Grand Campaign Rally' to kick-start the state-wide campaign for its candidate in the February 11 governorship poll, Seriake Dickson, following unfavourable security reports.

The party had planned to host the event today but was cancelled on Saturday following security reports that violence might be unleashed on attendees at the rally by people opposed to Dickson's candidature as PDP candidate for the governorship elections.

The rally was expected to be led by Vice President Namadi Sambo.

The party had been battling with one of its own, the current Governor of Bayelsa state, Timipre Sylva, over the right to choose Dickson as its candidate in preference to him (Sylva).

This development has led to litigations on both sides, even up to the Supreme Court.

While the party insisted that Dickson remains its candidate for the election, Sylva has said he would have none of such, claiming that he remains the authentic candidate of the party for the election, not minding the fact that he was disqualified from contesting the party primary last year under questionable circumstances.

With the party poised to show its resolve to shun all opposition to Dickson's candidacy, the grand rally was planned for

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President Goodluck Jonathan (middle), Kano State Governor, Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso (left), and Emir of Kano, Alhaji Ado Bayero, during the President's condolence visit to the state ...on Sunday.
Photo: State House

Emir of Kano weeps over attacks

- Jonathan promises improved security • UN, EU condemn killings
- Tackle security challenges now, Labour tells President

By Our Reporters

EMIR of Kano, Alhaji Ado Bayero, was overwhelmed by the magnitude of Friday's multiple bomb blasts in the Kano metropolis in which about 200 persons reportedly died, as he

broke down and wept openly when he received President Goodluck Jonathan in his palace on Sunday.

The President had paid a visit to the Emir to condole with him, the people and government of Kano State over the series of bomb explosions targeted

mostly at public facilities and institutions.

Jonathan had earlier told the Emir that he was in the state to sympathise with the people and government of Kano over the terrorist act the state capital suffered on Friday, which he described as a sad development.

He told the Emir that "the security of the country is a collective responsibility which should be taken seriously if we must live in peace and progress", stating that members of the Boko Haram sect are not spirit "but human beings in our midst".

He said the hunt for members

of the sect must be the responsibility of all irrespective of tribe and religion and vowed that his government will not rest until terrorism was wiped out in the country.

The President promised that the Federal Government will

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News

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Libya could fall into 'bottomless pit' - NTC chief

Mustafa Abdel Jalil, the head of Libya's ruling National Transitional Council (NTC), warned on Sunday the country could be heading towards a "bottomless pit" after protesters stormed a government office in Benghazi when he was inside.

A crowd demanding the resignation of the Libyan government smashed windows and forced their way into the NTC's local headquarters late on Saturday, in the most serious show of anger at the new authorities since Muammar Gaddafi was ousted.

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Politics

Why anti-corruption crusade should start with the public sector - Esuene

We can postpone the evil day, but the evil day will always come. Nigeria is blessed with human and natural resources but we have not managed our resources well. So you cannot say that Nigeria is rich. How can Nigeria be rich, rich with what? Is it in the bad roads everywhere? It is only in Akwa-Ibom, because of the dynamism of our governor.

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Sports

African Cup of Nations: Drogba gives Cote d'Ivoire winning start

Didier Drogba's first-half header gave Ivory Coast a 1-0 win in their African Cup of Nations opener against Sudan.

It was a trademark header by the forward, who leapt high to power the ball in after good work by his Chelsea teammate Salomon Kalou.

Sudan proved stubborn in defence and almost responded immediately, but Moutata's shot was tipped onto the bar by Barry.

Ivory Coast should have wrapped the game up in the second half but Gervinho, Yaya Toure and Drogba were guilty of bad misses.

Given the star quality throughout their team, it's not hard to see why Ivory Coast are favourites to win the African Cup of Nations.

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Life

Fate of book business in democracy

It has often been argued that the status of a country's administrative structure always has tremendous influence on its economic development. The vulnerability of the business of writing in Nigeria, for instance, cannot be divorced from the status of the country's democratic structures. A critical appraisal of events, publishing and marketing of books and book products in book industry in the last 12 years of democratic rule in Nigeria cannot be over-emphasised.

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churches were the type used at quarries to blast rocks, adding that minimal damage of the perimeter fence and part of a roof as well as the after-effect vibration affecting the louver glasses were what happened to the churches.

"The exploded IEDs, which our bomb experts had classified as surface blasting that could be merely mounted and ignited, and is normally used in quarries for blasting rocks, caused minimal damage of part of the perimeter fence and part of a roof at the three points of explosion, and the after-effect vibration also affected the louver glasses of the adjoining houses and there was no report of casualty," Aduba said.

He called for support of the people of the state by always giving the police and other se-

curity operatives useful information with a view to assisting in tackling crimes.

"This is a trying period for us all and we need public support in a centralised security network for which we call on the entire citizenry and good people of Bauchi State to be part of, and see it as a civic responsibility by giving useful and genuine information to the security agents."

Aduba said the hoodlums tried to truncate the relative peace so far witnessed in Bauchi State, adding, however, that "but as officers on oath, we remain undeterred and on course in our quest at ensuring an enduring peace in the state."

When contacted on telephone, pastor in charge of the ECWA 2, Shuaibu Byal, who is also chairman of the Bauchi State Christian Pilgrims Welfare Board, said they heard the explosion at about 5.00 a.m., add-

ing that it was a minor damage that was done to the fence of his church.

"The damage is very minor. The explosion occurred at about 5.00 a.m. About 10 blocks could be used in repairing the fence," he said.

Secretary of Sayawa Council of Elders and Traditional Rulers, Tafawa Balewa and Bogoro LGA, Bukata Zyadi, said the attack was coordinated and aimed at the Sayawa people.

He called on government to act fast to stop the serial killing of Sayawa people in the area.

Zyadi also called on security agencies to investigate the recent killings in the area by bringing the culprits to face the wrath of the law.

Meanwhile, deafening gunshots shattered the peace of Olugbobiri community in Southern Ijaw Local Government area of Bayelsa State on

Saturday night when some hoodlums invaded the palatial home of ex-militant commander, Africa Ukparsia (alias 'General Africa') and razed it down.

There was panic in the community as the people scammed into nearby creeks to take refuge.

Daily Independent gathered that a policeman and an ex-militant youth guarding the expansive building were killed by the armed invaders who opened fire on them.

It was learnt that the gunmen arrived the community in three speedboats at about 10.00 p.m.

They sped away after setting the massive building ablaze.

Africa was absent when the armed invaders struck.

The attack on the home came barely 24 hours after two separate explosions occurred near Peace Park, Yenagoa and Tombia Bridge, in the Etegwe suburb of the state capital.

A source revealed that Africa was one of the ex-militants who allegedly declared that Bayelsa State would be ungovernable if the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) failed to give its governorship ticket to Governor Timipre Sylva in the February election.

According to the source, the attack might have been targeted at one of Sylva's foot soldiers.

But another source claimed that the assault on Africa's home may not be unconnected with the crisis rocking the fold of ex-militant commanders following the release of an undisclosed sum of money to them by the Presidential Amnesty Committee.

Police Public Relations Officer for Bayelsa State, Eguavoen Empkai, said he was yet to be briefed by the divisional police officer in charge of Olugbobiri area.

Emir of Kano weeps, Jonathan promises improved security

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work closely with Kano State to assist victims of the blasts currently on admission in various hospitals.

Jonathan said it is high time people also made contributions towards improving their security by nosing around to establish the content of the character of their neighbours and report suspected ones to relevant authorities.

He recalled how peaceful Kano has been all this while until Friday's attacks, which, he said, took the whole nation by surprise.

He promised the Emir that government will look into his request for deployment of more policemen in Kano to beef up security in the state as well as have the required strength of policemen to tackle other vices.

Bayero, in his own remarks, also admitted that security is a collective effort "except we want to be consumed by the current wave of terrorism".

He re-echoed the request by Governor Rabiu Kwankwaso of the state that 8,000 policemen is grossly inadequate for Kano and demanded for more.

In the words of the Emir, the attacks were unfortunate and ugly.

"I hope that those behind it believe and fear God, the Emir council would do its best to assist in the improvement of security in the state, but the Federal Government should also play a role as the current strength of

Kano police is insufficient going by its estimated 10 million population; 8,300 policemen is nothing to write home about," Bayero added.

European Union (EU), the United Nations (UN), United Kingdom and Canada in separate statements on Sunday also condemned the bomb attacks on Kano.

Secretary General of the UN, Ban Ki-moon, condemned "in the strongest terms" the series of attacks in Kano, "which had targeted eight official buildings, including several police posts, the police headquarters and immigration offices".

The UN scribe said he was "appalled at the frequency and intensity of recent attacks in Nigeria, which demonstrate a wanton and unacceptable disregard for human life".

Spokesperson for Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, also condemned the attacks, consoling its victims and pledging support for Nigeria in its battle against terrorism.

"We will discuss with the Nigerian government in the coming days, including at our forthcoming ministerial dialogue in early February, possible ways and concrete actions in support of peace, security and development in the country, particularly for the poor communities," the statement from Ashton's office said.

On his part, UK Foreign

Secretary, William Hague, described the attacks as shocking and appalling.

In statement, Hague expressed his condolence to families of those killed in the attack.

The statement reads in part: "I am shocked and appalled by the large scale terrorist attacks in Kano, Nigeria yesterday. The full horror of last night's events is still unfolding, but we know that a great many people have died and many more have been injured."

"The nature of these attacks has sickened people around the world and I send my deepest condolences and sympathies to the families of those killed and to those injured."

"There is no place in today's world for such barbaric acts and I condemn in the strongest possible terms those who carried them out."

"These events underline the importance of the international community standing together in the face of terrorism in all its forms."

Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister, John Baird, in his own reaction described Friday's attack as cowardly.

He expressed condolences of the Canadian government, just as he reiterated commitment of his country towards addressing issues of terrorism in Nigeria.

The statement reads in part: "Canada unequivocally condemns these latest cowardly attacks in Nigeria's north."

"On behalf of all Canadians, I offer my deepest sympathies to

the families and friends of those killed and wish a speedy recovery to those hurt by this senseless violence."

"We stand with the people and government of Nigeria in their efforts to combat the vicious scourge of terrorism, bring about stability and maintain unity in the face of this pressing challenge."

Organised Labour on its part described the attacks in Kano as barbaric, insisting that "the Federal Government has the responsibility to checkmate those who are posing a real threat to national security now".

It also called on President Goodluck Jonathan as the chief security officer of the country to "urgently proffer solutions on how to tackle the Boko Haram crisis as Nigerians are now more apprehensive on their safety".

President of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Abdulwaheed Omar, said "the mass killing of innocent citizens in Kano by Boko Haram is uncalled for, and so, the Federal Government has the responsibility to tackle the security challenges now because Nigerians are apprehensive of their safety."

"We call on President Jonathan, as the chief security officer of the country to proffer solutions to the embarrassing cluelessness on how to tackle the Boko Haram crisis because, as it is now, the crisis is not tied to religious inclinations and so, the government should come out with initiatives

on how to tackle it," he said.

Omar added that "It is unfortunate that innocent citizens are the victims of spate of bombing in the country. These events underline the importance of all security agents of government standing together in the face of terrorism in all its forms."

Also, the President General of the Trade Union Congress (TUC), Peter Ebele, while calling on the Federal Government to review its security apparatus in the face of the challenging high insecurity in the country, insisted that government needed to re-appraise new measure to combat the nation's security lapses.

"TUC expressed shock and sadness at the scale of the latest attacks and the number of innocent people who were sent to their early graves, and condoled with the families of the victims."

"We call on the Federal Government to proffer new measures to tackle the nation's security challenges because if the attacks are allowed to continue, Nigerians may lose confidence in the ability of government, which is to ensure the security and well-being of the citizenry," he added.

"We urge the Federal Government to start off by calling a national security summit to be attended by stakeholders in the country to help proffer solutions to the crisis, while some form of engagement, instead of relying solely on the use of brute force, which will not work."

PDP cancels Bayelsa governorship rally

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today to officially kick off the campaign. However, antagonists to Dickson and the party gave a warning shot on Friday by detonating two bombs within Yenagoa, the Bayelsa State capital, to ward off the party leadership from turning up at the rally.

The Vice President is the head of the campaign committee.

However, no injuries were recorded in the Yenagoa blasts, unlike the Kano bomb attack which took place same day with heavy casualty.

The PDP in response to the warning signals abruptly cancelled the rally without giving details of when next it will be held.

To save its face, the party in a statement by its National Publicity Secretary, Rufai Ahmed Alkali, disclosed that the rally was suspended in honour of persons who died and those who suspended injuries during

the Friday blast in Kano.

The statement said, "The PDP National Campaign Committee for the 2012 Gubernatorial Election in Bayelsa State under the Chairmanship of His Excellency the Vice President, Arc. Muhammad Namadi Sambo, wishes to announce the suspension of the Grand Campaign Rally originally planned to take place at Yenagoa, Bayelsa State on Monday the 23rd January 2012."

"This is in view of the sad events that took place in Kano on Friday 20th January 2012 during which many lives were lost and several properties destroyed. A new date will be announced later."

"Meanwhile, the Acting National Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party, Alhaji Abubakar Kawu Baraje, on behalf of the National Working Committee and members of the party nationwide wish to condole the President of the Federal Re-

public of Nigeria, Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan GCFR, over this shocking event.

"Our hearts go especially to the Governor of Kano State, Dr Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, the government and people of Kano State over this harrowing experience."

"May the gentle souls of all those who died rest in perfect peace and may God give the families of all those who died, got wounded or lost property the strength to bear the loss with fortitude," the statement added.

However, a dependable source within the PDP hierarchy revealed that the party was scared to death by the blasts that went off in broad daylight within Yenagoa without anyone having any trace of the perpetrators.

"You won't expect the party to take chances with the lives of important dignitaries expected to grace the event. The message sent to the party is very clear;

only a fool will ignore it," said the source.

The first explosion occurred at Tombia area of Yenagoa on Friday night when some persons attempted to blow up an iron bridge popularly known as 'colonial bridge' which links the Niger Delta University, Amasoma in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area to the state capital.

Amasoma is the hometown of the former Governor of the state, Diepreye Alamieyeseigha, one of the major supporters of Dickson.

The second explosion went off almost the same time at the Peace Park, opposite the Government House, where a car parked around the area went up in flames.

Meanwhile, Sylva has urged the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to initiate proceedings at the Court of Appeal in Abuja to vacate the

ex-parte order issued by the Federal High Court sitting in Abuja mandating it (INEC) to put the name of Seriake Dickson on its list of governorship candidates for the governorship poll.

Sylva, who described as "immoral, ungodly and pathetic" the said court order obtained by fraud in the dead of the night, urged INEC to file an application at the Appeal Court for a stay of execution of the order pending the determination of his appeal, seeking to vacate the said order on account that the action which triggered it amounted to an abuse of court/judicial process and ought not to have been entertained. He believes that an appeal by INEC would have a strong legal footing since the subject matter of the order sought and obtained by Dickson was same as the one before the Supreme Court and therefore amounted to an abuse of court/judicial process.