

# THREE KILLED, MANY INJURED AS ANOTHER BLAST ROCKS KADUNA

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•Photo: Patrick Yakowa, Kaduna State Governor

•Police intercept 963 explosives in eight months, detain 30 suspects

•Beef up security nationwide ahead *Eid-el-Fitri*

**By Wisdom Patrick (Lagos), Baba Negedu (Kaduna) and Patrick Onu (Kano)**

**Two suspected** suicide bombers carrying an object believed to be a bomb were on Tuesday evening killed in Kaduna when the object exploded on them.

A motorcyclist riding along with them was also killed by what the police said could be an Improvised Explosive Device (IED).

According to the Kaduna State police spokesperson, Abubakar Balteh, “Two persons on motorbikes riding through Singer Roundabout passing through NNPC Mega filling station along Ali Akilu Road were carrying Improvised Explosive Device (IED) which exploded on them.

“Forensic experts are there to work on it.”

The incident happened at about 4.00 p.m. along the ever busy Ali Akilu Road within the Kaduna metropolis when workers were just closing from their offices.

The third victim, the unidentified motorcyclist, who was said to be heading towards Ungwan Sarki area of the metropolis at the same time with the suspects, *Daily Independent* gathered, was rushed to the 44 Army Reference Hospital where he later died.

However, unconfirmed reports said scores of passersby were also killed in the explosion, just as many more were said to have been rushed to the hospital.

Armed soldiers and other security personnel who immediately condoned off the scene prevented people from getting close, as officers were seen removing the charred bodies of the victims.

This was happening just as a swarm of bees from nowhere took over the scene of the bomb explosion, making it difficult for security men and officials of other government agencies to immediately pick the dead bodies.

Hundreds of onlookers who besieged the area as soon the explosion occurred had to cut leaves from nearby trees to ward off the bees.

The police also threw canisters of tear-gas to help in keeping the bees off the area.

Many people, including journalists, that went there were stung by the bees in addition to security men's harassment, driving people from getting closer to the spot.

At press time on Tuesday, the three motorcycles destroyed in the blast were still at the scene.

An eyewitness who simply gave her name as Rita James said: "I was in the house when I heard a loud sound, it even shook our house, and we ran out to look at what happened, only for us to see three persons and three motorbikes lying down on the ground.

"But at a point we couldn't get nearer because of bees, we don't know where the bees suddenly came from, they were stinging people."

Another eyewitness, Yakubu, said he was passing by when he heard the blast and ran there only to see the three victims lying on the ground.

"I was coming from the house going to visit a friend when I heard the sound and I thought it was gunshot; then I saw the three of them (victims) and three motorcycles, they were all lying on the ground.

"Two of them were dead, while one of them was still moving. Then the bees spread around and started stinging people."

Also in Kano on Tuesday, the police confirmed that a total of 963 undetonated explosives were recovered from various parts of the state capital in the last eight months.

The police also said among dangerous weapons intercepted by them lately from suspected terrorists were two suicide primed car bombs.

Kano State Commissioner of Police, Ibrahim Idris, made these disclosures at a press conference at the Police Officers' Mess in Bompai, Kano.

He said from January to date 963 deadly explosives were mopped up and defused or detonated.

The police boss told newsmen that men of the anti-bomb squad of his command also intercepted a high caliber explosive in the premises of the Federal College of Education, Kano.

He said the object was successfully detonated, pointing out that the explosive was concealed in an aviation gas tube.

“Also on July 29 this year, the command’s anti-bomb squad recovered 10 undetonated explosives at Rijija Zaki along Jamblock Estate while on August 1 four Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) were also uncovered and detonated at Rijija Zaki while one of such explosives was detonated in the main campus of Bayero University, Kano”.

The police chief said all the live explosives uncovered were successfully detonated and that no harm was done to either lives or properties in the process.

He disclosed that three suspects are in police net in connection with prohibited firearms and gave the names of the suspects as Matthew Oshobgemi from Kogi State, Dominic Orji, Anambra State and Umaru Nasarawa from Kaduna State, adding that two pistols, 11 pump action rifles, one air pistol, nine double barrel rifles and 176 cartridges were recovered from the suspects.

According to Idris, four men suspected to be members of an unlawful gang known as ‘Yandaba’ are in police custody, pointing out that three knives, cutlasses, swords and wraps of weeds suspected to be Indian hemp were intercepted from the suspects.

He also said the command made a number of arrests in connection with armed robbery committed in the city within the period.

Meanwhile, some 65,000 officers and men of the special anti-terrorist squad of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) would be in charge of security at mosques and other designated places across the country as Muslims gear up for the celebration Eid-el-Fitri next week.

Already the Federal Government has declared Monday and Tuesday next week public holidays to allow Muslims mark the occasion which signifies the end of Ramadan fast.

A top police source disclosed to *Daily Independent* in a telephone interview from Abuja that the police high command was not leaving anything to chance, and that it had mapped out watertight security arrangement to forestall any planned breach, especially in the North.

It was gathered that some members of the anti-terrorist squad would be on their duty posts fully armed but in plain clothes.

“Majority of the policemen that would be on duty that day will not wear uniform. Because they will be working with our intelligence department, most of them will not be in the normal police uniform but there will be something on them to distinguish them from other members of the public,” the source stated.

He added that every major mosque and other places of worship, including Muslim praying grounds would be adequately protected.

“The IGP has vowed to ensure a hitch-free celebration to mark the end of Ramadan fast, and there is nobody or group that would stop that. This is a task, and we are ready to carry it out.”

It was also gathered that the six Deputy Inspectors General (DIGs) of Police have been directed to relocate to their geo-political zones to supervise the security arrangement.

The DIGs are to be assisted by the Assistant Inspectors General (AIGs) of Police at the zones, while state police commanders are to ensure that no unpleasant incident happens within their states.

The source added that apart from the special squad, the entire members of the Nigeria Police have been placed on red-alert to check every form of criminality through the period.

Inspector General (IG) of Police, Muhammed Abubakar, in a chat enjoined all Muslims to use the occasion to pray for the peaceful co-existence in the country.

Meanwhile, investigation has revealed that some prayer grounds and mosques may not be used by Muslim faithful for the prayer to end Ramadan fast.

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