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[Yusufu Aminu idegu Jos.](#)

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Some of the survivors of the Christmas Eve explosions receiving medical attention at the BUTH, Jos

TARU Bala went to a bar to have a drink with two of his brothers. The two brothers did not leave the place alive. They were consumed by the explosions which rocked Jos on Christmas Eve. **Bala and two other survivors**

narrate their experiences to YUSUF IDEGU at the Bingham University Teaching Hospital (BUTH).

Taru Bala, an employee of the Jos North Local government and resident of Angwa Rukuba, was at Sauki Relaxation Centre for drinks to celebrate the season when the Jos Christmas Eve

explosions went off.

Bala said: "I went there with two of my brothers to celebrate the Christmas Eve. I went there with my junior brother and my senior brother—James Ashaka and Nabasu Musa. We are Anaguta by tribe. But they both died. I was the only one rescued by the patrol team."

He added: "The joint, which is located in a storey building and owned by one Ibo man collapsed. The whole of the building collapsed as a result of the bomb blast."

Like Bala, Olayinka Olaniyi is also counting his losses. He knows what it means to lose people who only hours earlier were neighbours. Olaniyi, a midfielder with the Plateau United Football Club, is banking on God to be able to resume his career soonest. His eyes and hands were hit in the explosions.

Since that day, he has been an in-patient at the Bingham University Teaching Hospital (BUTH), Jos. He is one of the 57 victims of the explosions who are on admission at the hospital for third degree injuries.

His life took a dangerous bend around 7pm when his landlord sent him to Angwa Rukuba to get some soft drinks for the festive season.

He said: "I was sent by my landlord to get him some crates of soft drinks for the Christmas. He sent two of us, his son and me. On getting there, I waited outside, but when the boy was delaying, I went inside to hurry him up. I went inside and in less than two minutes, the bomb detonated with a very heavy sound. That was the last I know about myself. I only regained consciousness the next day at this hospital. By the grace of God, I wish to recover fast and resume playing soccer."

Olaniyi said he did not notice anything unusual before the explosions that have left his legs badly damaged. "I did not notice anyone, because the place was rowdy; everybody was rushing for soft drinks and the place is entirely a busy area. So, everybody was busy; you can hardly notice something like that," he recalled.

Unlike Olaniyi, Shetu Dogo has no hope of using one of her legs again. The doctors have cut it off to save her life. 58-year old was caught in the explosion after deciding to get a torchlight to escape from the darkness the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) had thrown his area.

She said: "On that fateful day, when it was getting dark, I decided to go out to Gadabiu to buy a torchlight from the road side. I had finished paying for the item; the seller was just fixing the batteries when all of a sudden the blast occurred. My legs were badly damaged; one of my legs have been amputated by doctors."