

# Bombs: 15 dead in cities

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•A woman and her son, victims of the blast, at Diamond Crest Hospital, Zuba ... yesterday.

-13 dead in Bauchi -Two kids injured in Zaria -Two victims in Abuja

MORE bombs went off yesterday, as the casualty figures of Sunday's explosions were released.

Fifteen people have been confirmed dead and scores injured in the explosions in

Zuba, near Abuja, Bauchi, Maiduguri and Zaria on Sunday night – hours after the inauguration of President Goodluck Jonathan in Abuja amid tight security.

Thirteen people died in the explosions at the Mammy Market inside the 33 Artillery Brigade barracks in Bauchi on Sunday night.

Chief of Army Staff Lt.-Gen. Azubike Ihejirika told officers and men of the Command in Bauchi yesterday that 40 people were injured in the blast.

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) said two people died in the Zuba explosions; 11 others were injured.

There were more explosions yesterday in Maiduguri and Zaria, where a blast also occurred on Sunday night.

Gen. Ihejirika said the explosions were "an act of terrorism". "It is a challenge that you must face," he told his men.

He said anti-terrorism and dog units would be introduced in the Army.

The Federal Government yesterday introduced some tough anti-terrorism measures.

Former Minister of Defence Adetokunbo Kayode reviewed the incidents with the service chiefs.

A Presidency source, who pleaded not to be named because "the matter is sensitive", said: "We have reviewed the situation and we can no longer treat those behind these explosions with levity.

"The government has decided to take very strict, co-ordinated and concerted action against the perpetrators of bomb explosions.

"We thought that the explosions would end with the campaign and the elections but the way things are going, the blasts are threats to national security.

"With the inauguration of President Goodluck Jonathan, we are ready to guarantee security of lives and property.

"We will be decisive and civil, but, unfortunately, when we take drastic steps, the media will be the first to criticise us."

Another source said the Chief of Army Staff was sent to Bauchi to "take stock of things".

He added: "Preliminary investigation into the two incidents in Zuba and Bauchi by security agencies has started. The outcome will determine how the government will go about its coordinated action.

"Anti-bomb units in various agencies have begun forensic examinations of shrapnel and elements retrieved from the explosions sites."

The Director-General of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Mr. Muhammad Sani Sidi, has ordered that the injured be evacuated to the Gwagwalada Specialist Hospital in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

The Head of Public Relations of the agency, Alhaji Yushau Shuaib, said: "We have taken over the care of the victims from the Government of Niger State.

Initially, the 11 victims were admitted in private hospitals, but they were taken to the specialist hospital for enhanced treatment."

The triple bombings at the Shadawanka Army barracks in Bauchi occurred on Sunday evening in a popular section of the Mammy market at 8:08pm. There were many patrons in the place.

All the victims are said to be civilians. Officials declined comment on details of the victims.

The casualty figure announced by the Army Chief conflicts with those given by other officials. Bauchi Police Commissioner Mohammed Indabawa, said five persons died.

The General Officer Commanding (GOC) 3 Division of the Army, Jos, Major-General Sunday Idoko, described the incident as

"unfortunate".

He said Army barracks within his command are porous since there are no perimeter fences. Besides, in his view, "security should be everybody's responsibility".

The 33 Brigade Commander, Brig.-Gen Agbo Robinson, whose command oversees the Mammy market, said only two persons died. The Bauchi State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), "all in all, 14 people died, 29 hospitalised with various degrees of injuries, but eight were treated and discharged".

An object suspected to be a bomb yesterday exploded at Ungwan Juma community in Zaria, Kaduna State, injuring two children. It was the second explosion in Zaria within 12 hours.

Earlier on Sunday evening, while the state was still celebrating a peaceful inauguration, a bomb exploded at a popular drinking parlour in PZ area, injuring two people.

Although there was no major casualty in the two incidents, eye witness accounts said the two kids were on their way to fetch water when the bomb exploded. They are hospitalized.

Before Sunday's inauguration, there were threats by a faceless group claiming to be Boko Haram to disrupt the ceremony.

The threat led to high security cordon around the metropolis, especially at the Murtala Square, venue of the inauguration.

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Aminu Lawal (DSP), said the explosions were not caused by a bomb, but an explosive.

There was anxiety yesterday in Maiduguri when a bomb exploded on Baga Road in the Borno State capital.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) gathered from eyewitnesses that the bomb exploded at a road side around 8 a.m.

"We were on duty at the bank when we heard a big sound close by, but we later discovered that it was a bomb planted at a roadside by unknown persons," Mr Simon Owoh, a security guard in a commercial bank, said.

Owoh said the bomb was planted in anticipation of people passing through the road in the morning.

"We thank God that nobody was around when the explosion took place," he said.

Police spokesman Lawal Abdullahi declined comments on the incident.

The police had alerted the public over planned attacks by suspected Boko Haram (Western education is sin) members.