

# BOKO HARAM:

- How Task Force arrested slain leader Yusuf
- Why Konduga will spend term in SSS custody
- Senator begins battle for bail
- Sultan, Oritsejafor seek murder trial for suspects

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TRUTH IN DEFENCE OF FREEDOM

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• The scene of the explosion ... yesterday

PHOTO: TONY AKOWE

## Horror in Kaduna

■ 12 die in explosion hours after peace talks

‘One of the two people on the motorcycle died immediately, but the other person lost an arm and also sustained serious burns. He started running down the street, crying for help ... Four generators in front of the shop also created some sparks, killing three people ... Festus Ugu lost three of his boys.’

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• SHELL, ENI BUY \$1B OIL BLOCK P11 • ACCESS BANK TO RAISE N13B P11



KADUNA EXPLOSION

# Residents relive mysterious explosion

**H**YCENT Nwafor sells vehicle spare parts in one of the shops in Oriakpata in the heart of Kaduna, which was devastated by a mysterious explosion yesterday. Nwafor recalled how the explosion occurred.

He said: "My shop is adjacent the place that the explosion took place, I sell spare parts. We just heard a loud noise and all of a sudden, we started seeing fire and smoke everywhere. I know that so many people died. Some of the victims have been evacuated to the hospital."

Sunday Okafor, a spare parts seller, said he was with four other colleagues when the incident occurred, but he was the only one who came out alive.

Okafor said: "We were standing this morning discussing, until we heard a sound, I had to crawl for escape just to discover that they four other people died instantly. There are still some people trapped inside. Some people came on a motorcycle and started asking questions, they were holding something and all of a sudden what they were holding exploded with their machine, the two of them scattered immediately."

Another eyewitness, Abdulwaheed Oyewumi, who works as a mechanic in the area, said he became aware of the explosion when he saw somebody burning and running.

"From my shop, I saw somebody running and burning and people started pouring water on the man, so, we ran to discover that some shops were in flames and shortly after, we heard a sound of explosion," Oyewumi recalled.

It was a loud sound that made Emeka Udoji, an auto parts seller, realised he was not going to be able to carry on with the business of the day.

Udoji debunked claims that the explosion was, perhaps, caused by a gas cylinder. He said: "The blast occurred at the back of my shop. There are people living at the back of my shop; no one sells batteries or gas cylinder around here. From my experience and what I saw, there is nothing like explosion of gas or battery. This is bomb explosion."

For Sunday Anyigobu, he was discussing the death of veteran actor Sam Loco when he realised the area was on siege. He kept his hands on his head and the ceiling of his shop caved in on him.

Anyigobu said: "I entered the shop and the guy gave me N1,000 and we were discussing Sam Loco's death, and I went outside and before I knew what was happening a just heard a sound, and I kept my hands on my head and the whole ceiling fell on me and I managed to escape but the guy I was talking to before I was going out, I am not sure he is alive because he was still inside as I was making my way outside. He is my brother who I went to give change. The explosion was outside the shop. I did not see

From Tony Akowe, Kaduna

anybody apart from the small boys that I saw burnt. I have been calling the guy's number but his number is not going. I can confirm the death of three people, one Igbo and two Hausa people living inside the compound. The Igbo's name is Ebuka. Inside the shop there is no battery. I sell Peugeot parts and he sells truck parts. There is nothing explosive in the shops. This occurred in front of my shop though I cannot say precisely the exact time but it was in the morning. About three people died."

But Police Commissioner Ballah Nasarawa believes there is no need to suspect any foul play. He said the incident occurred in a shop where they sell batteries and gas. Nasarawa said: "It is a sad incident. As at now, we are not suspecting any foul play, you can see that the fire is still burning, but if you observe, it is from where they sell batteries and gas; so, we are suspecting that it is an explosion from within not sabotage from outside. As at now, there are casualties but I cannot give you certain numbers until after investigations."

Special Adviser to the Governor on Security and Coordinator, Operation Yaki Col. Dangana Mamman, stressed there is need for proper investigation before jumping into conclusion.

Mamman said: "We need to be very careful ourselves; we must make sure that we comb our environment personally. Like what has happened now, it is from somebody's shop. He came in the morning, opened his shop and this thing happened; I cannot imagine that somebody threw something. The allegation that people came on a bike is still an allegation yet to be confirmed. This thing was inside the shop, the explosion came from the shop. It is an explosion I can confirm."

But two eyewitnesses insisted it was a hand grenade that was thrown. Oke Oke and Fabian Ozochukwu told *The Nation* they saw the boys who perpetrated the act.

Oke said: "The boys came on a motor cycle with something; it was burning and they threw the substance away. They both scattered immediately and their machine got burnt. I don't know how many people are dead now. I can't remember any name now. I sell motor spare parts."

Ozochukwu said: "One of the boys on the bike had his body burnt and ran down there. I don't know whether he died or not. I can't tell. There are two people on top of a bike. I was outside chatting and they were carrying something and that something they were carrying exploded more than five times. There were about four or five generators around there; so, immediately the thing exploded, the generators exploded also. They were passing and the thing exploded on the bike."



## TIMELINE OF 2011 EXPLOSIONS

- March 3:** Three people are killed and 21 injured by an explosive device thrown from a car at an election near Nigeria's capital, Abuja.
- April 7:** An explosion hits a polling booth at Unguwar Doki, Maiduguri, Borno State injuring more people.
- April 8:** Bomb explosion at the Independent Electoral Commission office in Suleja, kills 11.
- April 9:** An explosion hits a polling booth in a neighbourhood of the northeast Nigerian city of Maiduguri during a parliamentary election.
- April 15:** Youths riding on a motorcycle, throw a locally made bomb into the premises of the Maiduguri council office of the INEC.
- April 16:** A police station in the Lami Sula district of Maiduguri, which lies in the remote state of Borno, Nigeria's borders with Chad, Cameroun and Niger Republic, is bombed.
- April 16:** Bomb explosion occurs in two separate areas of Kaduna metropolis on the night of the presidential election in the state.
- April 21:** Two suspected bomb-makers die in a blast in Kaduna.
- April 25:** Three bomb blasts rip through a hotel and a motor park in Maiduguri killing at least two people.
- May 29:** 13 people are confirmed dead and 40 injured in a night blast at mammy market located in Suleja, Bauchi, the Bauchi State capital.
- May 29:** Eight victims lose their legs after an explosion occurred at Zuba, a suburb of Kubwa in Abuja.
- May 31:** Bomb explosion near bank on Baga Road in Maiduguri, the Borno State capital.
- June 16:** Boko Haram carries out massive bomb attack on Force Headquarters (also known as Louisa House), Abuja, targeted at the Inspector-General of Police. Officials believe it is the first bombing in Nigeria's history.
- August 26:** Boko Haram bombed the UN House, Abuja killing over 20 people.
- November 11:** Explosion in Bauchi left five people injured



## News

## KADUNA EXPLOSION



## Saraki condemns terrorist attacks

SENATOR Bukola Saraki yesterday condemned the terrorist attacks in the North. He said the bombing was an assault against all Nigerians and should not be tolerated.

The senator, who chairs Senate committee on Environment and Ecology, said the explosion in Kaduna is not acceptable and not in the best interest of peaceful coexistence of Nigeria.

The senator extends his condolences to the families of those who died in the explosion and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

He reaffirmed the Federal Government's commitment to combat terrorism.

He said the leadership of the National Assembly would support efforts to combat terrorism.

A statement by his Media Assistant, Akintoba Fatigun, said: "The distinguished senator also wishes to reassure both the national and the global community that Nigeria is committed to fighting the incur-



•Dr. Saraki

sion of terrorism into the country and commitment to ensuring a safe, peaceful and secure environment in Nigeria."

He urged the law enforcement agents to punish the perpetrator of the crime. He called on anyone with information on the criminal act to inform the security agencies.

## 'Providing relief is our concern'

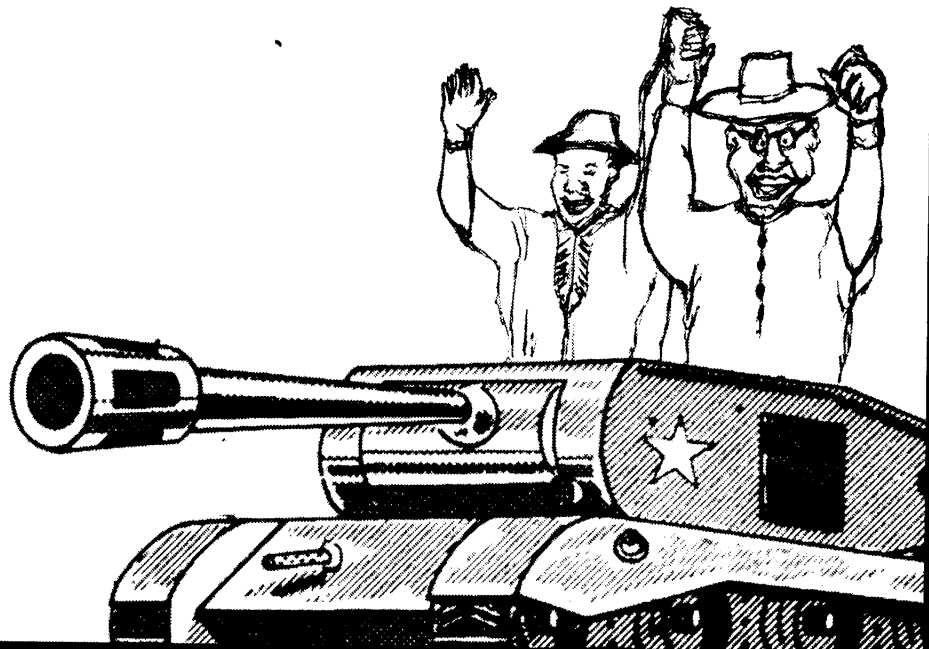
THE Executive Secretary of the State Emergency Management Authority (SEMA), Isiaka Makama, and the Acting Zonal Coordinator NEMA Northwest zone, Musa Lailah, said their immediate concern is to provide succour to the victims.

Makama said: "We heard that there was fire and we ran here to provide needed rescue. We are not sure of the number of casualties yet. When we get back to the office, we will see the extent of damage and ways of giving assistance. We are doing our best to put off the fire in the first instance."

Lailah said: "Reports reached us that there was a bomb explosion and I contacted all the stakeholders, the Red Cross, civil defence, FRSC, and we ran here to provide the needed assistance and see what prompted the incident. As at now we don't know the number of casualties but I can assure you that there are some deaths recorded. But before the end of the day, we can ascertain the number of the injured and deaths. We will take an assessment of what damage has been done and the causes and inform the appropriate authorities over the incident."

## BAYELSA; JUSTICE FOR THE HIGHEST BIDDER?

The people of Bayelsa are poor, but we have dignity. We are being cowed, but we insist on the culture of justice and freedom, that we cherish and have defended for generations. All we ask for is democracy, the voice of our people should be heard. We the people, must be allowed to choose the next Governor of the State. We are armless but not defenseless because our will remains our strength. Mr. President Sir, let the peoples' will prevail. Nigerians say NO to Governor at GUNPOINT!!!



Join us in telling OGA GEJ to stop the imposition.  
If he succeeds in Bayelsa, he will do it across the country.  
Issued by: COALITION OF NIGERIAN CIVIL RIGHT GROUPS (CONRIGs)

## The day after Arewa Peace and Unity conference

ANALYSIS By Olukorede Yishau

FOR two days, prominent northerners, including Vice-President Namadi Sambo and Senate President David Mark, were in Kaduna for a conference on Peace and Unity. It was organised by the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF), an organisation regarded as the voice of the North. The major concern of all who spoke at the summit was the worsening security in the region, where armed factions loosely grouped under the Boko Haram has for sometime been waging insurgency against the government.

Except Mark, almost every other leader who spoke at the conference, shied away from mentioning Boko Haram (Western education is forbidden). Mark, obviously puzzled by the conspiracy of silence, wondered if the development was out of fear of being attacked by members of the group, whose members are known to disown whoever is against them, including parents.

"Are we afraid" Mark asked, "to openly condemn Boko Haram either for political reasons or out of fear of possible attack by the sect?"

The group, which appears to be growing in sophistication and is believed to have links with al-Qaeda's North African affiliate, has attacked churches, homes and the Police Headquarters in Abuja. It has struck Abuja twice this year. The second time was at the United Nations Nigeria headquarters. The casualty was staggering.

There have been allegations that prominent northern politicians are its financiers. A former minister was said to have twice bailed its late leader when he was arrested by the police. A spokesman of the group jailed on Tuesday named a senator, Ali Ndume who is standing trial, and a former Borno State Governor, Ali Modu Sheriff, as its backers. Both have denied the allegation.

Governor Ibrahim Yakowa, whose state was the scene of yesterday's blast, told the conference, that the patrons of the violence in the North must be unmasked. Though Boko Haram has not claimed responsibility for yesterday's horror, some wonder if it is an indication that peace is a long distance away from the region. It may be too early to say. But it is an indication that it takes more than a talk shop for peace to be achieved.

•CLOCKWISE from top: A crowd, which gathered at the scene of the explosion; the motorcycle allegedly used by the bearers of the explosive device; a female victim of the explosion; and a male victim on the hospital bed PHOTOS: TONY AKOWE

## NEWS

# Horror in Kaduna as 12 die in explosion hours after peace talks

**B**ARELY 24 hours after the conclusion of the Arewa Conference on Peace and Unity in Kaduna, an explosion yesterday rocked the city. Twelve people died, many others injured, some in critical condition.

No group had claimed responsibility for the explosion last night.

The explosion occurred around 9 a.m. at Oriakpata, a popular vehicle spare parts market on the Katsina/Ogbomoso road, opposite the former Scala Cinema.

Eye witnesses told *The Nation* that two men on an army green Honda motorcycle threw a bag into one of the shops on House 32, Ogbomoso Road. It immediately exploded.

One of the two riders died on the spot. The other was taken by security agents to an unknown destination. He was unconscious.

Among the 12 people believed to have died from the explosion so far are two children.

The injured were taken to hospitals where about two of them are believed to be in intensive care. One sustained first degree burns. Eleven shops were affected.

Residents of the ever-busy Katsina Road and the adjoining streets were scared.

The bodies of eight of the victims were deposited at the Barau Dikko Specialist Hospital. Six others, who were injured, are at the hospital. One was taken to the St. Gerard Catholic Hospital.

The Public Relations Officer of St. Gerard Hospital, John Ali, said the victim brought to the hospital was in critical condition and will be transferred to the Ahmadu Bello

From Tony Akowe, Kaduna

University Teaching Hospital, Shika, near Zaria.

An eye-witness, Fabian Uzorchukwu, one of the shop owners, said he was outside when the explosion occurred.

Fabian said: "I was standing outside my shop when I saw two people coming on top of a motorcycle and, suddenly, something exploded when the person at the back of the motorcycle threw the thing towards the shop. I fell down and immediately ran inside my shop but the roof of the shop fell on me. But I managed to crawl outside again."

"One of the two people on the motorcycle died immediately, but the other person lost an arm and also sustained serious burns. He started running down the street, crying for help before he was rushed to hospital."

"Four generators in front of the shop also created some sparks, killing three people working on one (Wisdom, Ebuka and one other, a 16-year-old boy). We lost many people. Festus Ugu lost three of his boys."

"Property worth millions of naira were destroyed. In my shop alone, I lost goods worth N5 million. If you consider the contents of other shops, I will say apart from the people who died, we lost hundreds of millions of naira worth of property."

Another trader, identified simply as Onyeka, is believed to have been killed by the explosion.

Another eyewitness, Abdul, told *The Nation* he was outside his vehicle spare parts shop when the incident occurred.

He said: "There were two



•A man being consoled at the scene of the Kaduna explosion ... yesterday

PHOTO: TONY AKOWE

people on the motorcycle. The man riding it was heavily built and mature. He carried a younger man, carrying a carton containing the bomb.

"The bomb must have been timed because they suddenly threw it away, towards the shop after it had started sparking. It killed the rider of the motorcycle. The passenger sustained burns and had one of his arms chopped off."

"Some of those who died could have been saved, if the rescue operation had started earlier because there was a lady, Khadijat, whose brother is getting married next week. She was trapped in the rubble and was receiving calls for up to 20 minutes. Her body was later brought out from under the rubble."

A victim, Sunday Anigbogu, was lucky to have escaped being killed in the

blast. He was in his shop when the explosion occurred. Onyeka, with whom he was discussing, he said, was trapped under the rubble. He died but Anigbogu crawled out from under the ceiling, which caved in on him.

"I was speaking to Onyeka who was inside the shop when I heard the explosion. I raised up my hand, which was what saved me as the ceiling caved in on my hand and I managed to crawl outside. But Onyeka was trapped inside (and was later confirmed to have died)."

Soldiers, policemen, State Security Service (SSS), Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps and Red Cross officials were part of the rescue operation. Fire fighters from the Kaduna State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA)

battled hard to put off the fire that engulfed the scene.

Body parts littered the scene. They were picked up and packed into body bags.

At Rakiya Memorial Hospital, where two of the victims were taken, the Medical Director, Dr. Muhammad Bello, confirmed that they received injured persons, noting that the condition of one of the victims was critical.

"His tooth and jaw have been damaged and we will have to refer him to the Teaching Hospital," Bello said.

Kaduna State Commissioner of Police Ballah Nasarawa said: "It is a sad incident. As at now, we are not suspecting any foul play. You can see that the fire is still burning, but if you can observe, it is where they sell bat-

teries and gas cylinders. So, we are suspecting that it is an explosion from within, not sabotage from outside. As at now, there are casualties. I cannot give you certain number until after investigations."

The co-ordinator of the state special security outfit, Operation Yaki, Col. Dangana Mammam (rtd), said: "The allegation that people came on a bike is yet to be confirmed. This thing was inside a shop; the explosion came from the shop. It is an explosion, I can confirm."

Senior Special Assistant to the Governor on Media, Reuben Buhari described the incident as "unfortunate" and urged residents to give peace a chance. He said the government and the security agents will get to the bottom of the blast.

"We understand that the shop owners sell gas cylinders, motor batteries, generating sets and other items capable of causing explosion. The police are yet to brief the governor on what actually happened and so, we cannot conclude that it is actually a bomb. But we are not leaving anything to chance," Buhari said.

Eze Igbo-elect Chief Sylvanus Aneke, who visited the scene, urged the traders to remain calm. He said the government will definitely assist the victims.

He said the incident was not targeted at the Igbo, but Kaduna people. "The perpetrators should understand that they are all Nigerians and whatever their grievances are, taking the law into their hands will not solve the problem, but rather aggravate the issue," Aneke said.

## How Boko Haram leader Yusuf was arrested, by Army chief

From Kamarudeen Ogundele, Abuja

**T**HE Commander of the task force that arrested the late Boko Haram leader, Mohammed Yusuf, on July 30, 2009, Col. Benjamin Ahanotu, has relived the incident.

Col. Ahanotu said his men waded in "when the police could not curtail the crisis".

He spoke under cross-examination before Justice Donatus Okorowo of an Abuja Federal High Court in the case against five police officers standing trial for allegedly murdering Yusuf.

The police officers and men on trial include: Assistant Commissioners of Police (ACP) J.B. Abang, Y. Akeera and Mada Buba.

The others are Chief Superintendent of Police (CSP) Mohammed Ahmadu and Sgt. Adamu Gado.

They are facing a two-count charge of conspiracy to commit an offence, to wit, a terrorist act, contrary to Sections 315 and 516 of the Criminal Code and punishable under Section 15 (1) (2) of the EFCC Act, 2004.

Responding to questions from Kanis Nkpe, counsel to the first to fourth accused, Col. Ahanotu said "Mohammed Yusuf was arrested during an operation," he said there was "no stiff resistance" from the late Boko Haram leader.

He told the court that military uniforms, AK47 rifles and anti-tank weapons were retrieved from the group in

the raid.

The witness said before his mysterious death in the police custody, Yusuf had been arrested and released three times by the police.

He said he was aware that the Boko Haram group claimed responsibility for the attacks on the Police Headquarters, the United Nations (UN) House in Abuja, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) office in Suleja, Niger State, and other government establishments.

Col. Ahanotu said the sect has refused to stop carrying out its attacks after the death of Yusuf.

"After handing over Yusuf, I didn't follow the police to their station", he added.

The witness on October 24 testified that Yusuf was handed over to the Police alive by the Nigerian Army.

Col. Ahanotu said the original copy of the handover note was with the police authority in Maiduguri. According to him, Yusuf was arrested by his men following an intelligence report that he was hiding in an enclave. He was arrested as his men fled in disarray from the enclave.

The Commander also tendered a photocopy of the handover note and it was marked as an exhibit and admitted by the court.

The trial continues today.

## Boko Haram: Why Konduga will serve term in SSS custody

•Senator begins battle for bail

•Sultan, Oritsejafor seek murder trial for suspects

**T**HE fear of attack by Boko Haram members is the reason why its jailed spokesman, Ali Sanda Konduga, will serve his three-year term in the State Security Service (SSS) custody, it was learnt last night.

Prosecutor Cliff Osagie requested Chief Magistrate Oyebola Oyewunmi, who convicted Konduga, to allow him serve the jail term in the custody of the EFCC. The request was granted. This is contrary to the expectation that he would be sent to the prison.

It was gathered that Konduga is also assisting security agencies with information on the sect.

The source added: "With the sensitive information at the disposal of Konduga, he has been labelled a 'security risk' by Boko Haram and he cannot survive in a normal prison."

"In view of its antecedent, Boko Haram will kill Konduga wherever he is serving his prison term."

"Having cooperated so far with security agencies, it is ideal to protect him because he has more or less become an agent of the state."

From Yusuf Alli, Abuja and Adekunle Jimoh, Ilorin

"And the state cannot expose him to unnecessary risks. He is also assisting agencies with intelligence on the Boko Haram sect."

Also, less than 48 hours after fresh charges were filed against him at the Federal High Court, Senator Ali Ndume has decided to fight back on his alleged sponsorship of the Boko Haram sect.

The embattled Senator yesterday raised a legal team to battle for his bail.

He has assembled a five-man legal team headed by Mr Rickey Tarfa (SAN).

It was learnt that the team has been allowed access to Ndume for preliminary briefing.

A source said: "He has been in detention since November 3. The Senator has decided to fight his cause by getting a crack legal team led by Tarfa."

"We won't reveal other members of the team yet, to avoid being hounded by security agencies."

"So far, the four-count charge has amounted to nothing. We will secure Ndume's bail, and Nigerians will hear

his own side of the story. He told us that he is not a terrorist. He will surely open up."

Responding to a question, the source said: "The real battle has to do with Ndume's bail; he needs freedom to tell his story better. The state wants to detain him until the conclusion of his trial but he said that will jeopardise fair hearing."

A member of the family said: "Each time we got in touch with him, he always maintained his innocence. That is why we are ready to back him."

The Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) yesterday urged the federal government to charge members of the Boko Haram sect found culpable in wanton killings of people in parts of the country with murder under the criminal and penal codes.

NIREC also called for a "general review of security administration" following rising cases of violence and insecurity.

The council, co-chaired by President-General of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Saa'd Abubakar and President of



•Konduga

the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) Pastor Ayo Oritsejafor, also warned the government not to succumb to external pressures on same-sex marriage.

It commended the passage of the anti-same sex marriage bill by the Senate and urged the House of Representatives to follow suit.

President Goodluck Jonathan attended the opening ceremony of the meeting in Ilorin, the Kwara State capital, on Tuesday. In a communiqué issued at the end of its second-quarter meeting held in Ilorin, the body described the activities of Boko Haram as a menace and urged the government to address it effectively along with other security threats.

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