

# Kaduna: Death toll hits 52

By [Tony Akowe, Kaduna](#) 15 hours 15 minutes ago



•GOOD NIGHT: A deserted street in [Trikania](#), Kaduna...yesterday

We did it, says Boko Haram  
Govt relaxes 24-hour curfew

KADUNA was asleep for hours yesterday – no thanks to a 24-hour curfew imposed by the government to quell Sunday's reprisals after suicide bombings of three churches.

But there was time to count the dead - 50, the Nigerian Red Cross said.

The Islamist sect Boko Haram claimed responsibility for the suicide attacks in Zaria and Kaduna – the North's political capital.

The state government relaxed the 24-hour curfew, allowing residents time to search for loved ones and get supplies.

The Army said it had recovered a mobile phone belonging to one of the suicide bombers. It gave no details.

Aid workers searched for bodies among charred vehicles and destroyed market stalls.

Officials refused to give a breakdown of the death toll, clarifying who

died in the blasts and who was killed in reprisals.

“We did that for a reason,” said Andronicus Adeyemo, deputy head of disaster management at the Nigerian Red Cross. “Those figures are sensitive.”

Authorities of St. Gerard Catholic Hospital said 42 bodies were deposited in its morgue; 72 injured are being treated.

The Matron of the Barau Dikko Specialist Hospital, Mrs. Hassana Garba said there are 12 bodies in the hospital.

Authorities fear that a breakdown of the deaths will trigger reprisal killings. Most of the victims killed in church on Sunday are presumed to be Christian and most of those killed in reprisals are presumed to be Muslims, raising concerns that a distinction between initial and reprisal deaths will be interpreted as a Christian and Muslim breakdown.

In Kaduna, relief officials said they were still collecting bodies. Most victims were petty traders and transporters, such as bus drivers and commercial motorcyclist, who are presumed to be Muslims and who commute daily to the predominantly Christian southern part of the city.

Charred motorcycles, buses and stalls littered the city's deserted streets.

“We are still picking up bodies from reprisals,” Musa Ilela, the National Emergency Management Agency co-ordinator for Kaduna State, said.

Boko Haram said in an email that it was responsible for the attacks.

“Allah has given us victory in the attacks we launched (Sunday) against churches in Kaduna and Zaria towns which resulted in the deaths of many Christians and security personnel,” the statement in Hausa said.

Boko Haram, which means “Western education is sacrilege” in Hausa, is waging an increasingly bloody fight with security agencies and the public. More than 580 people have been killed in violence blamed on the sect this year alone.

Among those who died in the violence that ensued after the bombings was an official of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) who helped in evacuating victims at the Shalom Hospital.

The government, in a statement by the Senior Special Assistant to the Governor on Media, Reuben Buhari, said it decided to relax the curfew in view of the return to normalcy in the city.

The statement reads: “The 24 hours curfew imposed on Kaduna State in view of the recent incident has now been relaxed. With effect from today, Monday 18th June, people of Kaduna State can move freely from 2.00pm to 6.00pm. Subsequently, the curfew will now start from 6.00pm to 6.00am. The people are requested to remain calm, law abiding and cooperate with security agencies.”

The Kaduna State chapter of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and the Awareness Initiative of Nigerian (CHAIN) and the Nigerian Youth Council condemned the attack in strong terms and urged youths to refrain from reprisal attack.

In a statement by its Chairman, Rev. Sam Kujiyat, CAN asked the government to investigate the activities of soldiers who allegedly shot and killed two people within the metropolis during the protest against

the bombings.

“Let there be investigation because it is clear the soldiers were just shooting people. And many of the casualties were even shot to death by soldiers and police,” the CAN statement said.

The body expressed sadness over the reaction of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Aminu Tambuwal, whom they alleged reacted to the reprisal attack rather than the attack on churches.

CAN said: “The suicide bombings unexpectedly provoked dangerous and angry protests by youths in Kaduna South and environs bringing about deaths, injuries and destruction of property and vehicles of innocent people and is regrettable and condemnable in all sense.

“But that reaction of Speaker of the House of Representatives, Aminu Waziri Tambuwal, appears to be diversionary and political. He tends to be concerned with reprisal attacks than bothering about those killed and injured in the attacks against churches and Christians. It is unfortunate and demeaning to his office as a leader in the country to think in this way and manner

“CAN Kaduna State chapter wishes to appeal to all and sundry in Kaduna State to remain calm and cooperate with the Government to bring things under full normalcy in order to confront the bigger threat of Boko Haram in other guise.

The National Co-ordinator of the Christian Awareness Initiative of Nigerian (CHAIN) Pastor Ma’aji asked the government to stop attacks on Christians and churches.

CHAIN said: “Boko Haram’s insurgency against Christians is something every person abreast with issues in Nigeria is aware of

and this has continued unabated.

“CHAIN makes a clarion call on government to work and bring to an end the attacks against Christians and their churches in northern Nigeria. CHAIN wishes to remind the Nigerian public and the Presidency that Tirkania, one of the areas a church was attacked, is said to be where one suspected Boko Haram sponsor, who was arrested and released and the case has remained silent, lives.”

The National Youth Council of Nigeria in Kaduna State condemned the suicide attacks and the violence that followed and called on the youth to refrain from reprisal attacks on innocent people who are going about their businesses.

Its Secretary General, Danjuma Sariki, said in a statement that attacking innocent people will not solve the problem but rather escalate the problem and bring about more violence, thereby making our enemies proud and feeling that their aim of distablising and dividing us is being achieved.

He said: “Instead, the youths should remain calm, foster peace in their communities and cooperate with the security agencies in exposing the perpetrators of these dastardly acts. These bombings are some too many that needs the cooperation and understanding of all to nip it in the bud.

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