

## Kaduna death toll hits 110 as bomber strikes in Kano



### ***Five die as bomb hidden in fridge goes off at park***

A bomb went off in Kano yesterday, 24 hours after the Kaduna twin explosions in which former Head of State Gen. Muhammadu Buhari and a cleric, Sheikh Dahiru Bauchi were targets.

Five persons died in the Kano explosion, which took place at a popular motor park in Sabon Gari. Twelve persons were injured. The police said only one person died.

The death toll in the Kaduna explosions, which have been condemned by the United Nations (UN), former military President Gen. Ibrahim Babangida, the All Progressives Congress (APC) and others, has risen to 110.

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) called for a comprehensive investigation into the explosions, which it described as “abhorrent and criminal”.

The toll has risen to 110, with more injured victims being rushed to hospital for treatment, a humanitarian aid official said yesterday.

Abubakar Zakari Adamu, a spokesperson for the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), told reporters that 13 of the severely injured victims died in the hospitals.

A Xinhua reporter learnt that hundreds of people travelling through the northcentral state have been stranded following the 24-hour curfew imposed on Kaduna city.

Vehicles from neighbouring Kano, Katsina, Zamfara, Sokoto, Kebbi and Jigawa states were blocked from entering the city at the toll gate plaza on Zaria road, forcing hundreds of people to loiter around the area in heavy rain.

Vehicles from the South were also stranded at the toll gate on Abuja-Kaduna Road.

Except for children and a few vehicles and security personnel, roads in the city were completely empty until later in the afternoon after the curfew was lifted.

Kaduna State Commissioner for Information Mr. Ben Bako, said the curfew was lifted after it was reviewed at a State Security Council meeting.

Bako said: "Following the bomb blast that killed scores of persons on Wednesday leading to the imposition of the 24 hours curfew, an emergency Security Council meeting was summoned today (yesterday) and the situation was reviewed, subsequently, the curfew has been lifted.

"Citizens are advised to go about their legitimate businesses, remain calm, vigilant and report any suspicious movement of persons or vehicles to relevant security agents."

When reporters sought clarification on the curfew, death toll and other matters, Bako said: "No questions; no questions."

Contrary to eye witness account that no fewer than 82 people died in the explosion, he said: "39 persons were killed in the twin bomb blast all together; 34 persons died instantly while two died in the evening of the blast and another three died this morning (yesterday morning) with 37 persons injured and receiving treatment at various hospitals."

It was gathered that 37 injured victims were receiving treatment at 44 Nigerian Army Reference Hospital.

Governor Mukhtar Ramalan Yero and security chiefs visited the scenes of the explosions and the hospitals where the survivors were receiving treatment.

Yero cautioned residents to avoid crowded areas, saying terrorists now target such places.

He said the state government would foot the bills of the injured.

Speaking to reporters at the 44 Army Reference Hospital, Yero said: "First of all, I will like to thank God Almighty for what he has done for us in Kaduna. In the last two years, we have not had this kind of problem, but everything has its own time. This thing happened yesterday; it is a very sad incident. And whoever is behind this knows that he has no fear of God. This is very unfortunate; it is not supposed to be. So, we are totally condemning this act and we are also calling on people to condemn it and make sure people watch out for what is around them.

"Kaduna people have been very vigilant, but, unfortunately, because of the crowded town we had yesterday, this thing happened. But we know that, by the grace of God, this thing will never happen again. We will continue to do our best and we will continue to pray to God Almighty Allah for what he has done for us.

"We also visited the scenes of the blast. The one that is very major is that of Kawo, because in that one, they used a vehicle. The other is at Alkali Road; it was a suicide bomber and it was an individual.

"We also visited General Buhari, I spoke with him yesterday. We at the Security Council meeting decided in the middle of the meeting to go and see him. So, we went to greet him at home. I also called Sheikh Dahiru Bauchi and, as at that time, he was on his way to Saudi Arabia.

"We will continue to do our best to ensure the safety of everyone, but we need the support of the general public. It is no longer business-as-usual.

“If you look at this issue critically, you will discover that people just want to create problem and ensure there is crisis in Kaduna State and Nigeria generally. So, people must rise up and understand that it is no longer the issue of religion. It is no longer issue of politics. This is an issue of lives and property of people.

The NLC has called for a probe of the attempt on the lives of Gen. Buhari and Sheikh Bauchi.

Acting General Secretary Chris Uyot said in an email that a comprehensive investigation into the attacks was necessary to unravel those behind with a view to preventing similar attacks.

Uyot described the attacks, which resulted in the death of 82 Nigerians, as “criminal and abhorrent”.

The statement said: “Boko Haram, it seems, has become a convenient brand under which all manner of atrocities are committed.”