

restore their dignity and give them the relief they need".

On the bilateral relations be-

peace and security in the sub-region, given their historic, cultural and economic ties.

quoted because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

Borno blast death toll now 18

THE death toll from Wednesday's blast in Maiduguri has risen to 18, a civilian vigilante assisting the military against Boko Haram told AFP yesterday.

"We retrieved 18 dead bodies from the scene and many people with injuries," Danlami Ajaokuta said of the explosion on the city's Baga Road, which happened at about 17:30 on Wednesday.

Explosives are believed to have been left near a garage opposite a military unit, with many of the victims, roadside mechanics, taking a break from work.

No fewer than six people who died were recovered in the immediate aftermath,

Ajaokuta said on Wednesday.

He said "many people" were injured, some of them seriously, and were taken to hospital for treatment.

"The death toll may rise further," he added.

Early on Saturday morning, Boko Haram fighters shelled the city but were repelled by the military and a suicide bomber later killed 26 at a mosque.

On Tuesday morning, suburbs again came under fire from rocket-propelled grenades and at least 13 people were killed in a suicide attack at a cattle market.

About an hour before the Baga Road attack, residents in the village of Tunkushe,

some 12km north of Maiduguri, said a car exploded at a checkpoint.

There were no immediate indications of casualties.

Boko Haram, which was founded in Maiduguri in 2002, has been pushed out of captured territory and towns in northeast Nigeria by a coalition of troops from Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon.

But sporadic attacks continue. President Buhari has made ending the six-year insurgency a priority for his administration.

ADVERT HOTLINES

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whistle on the fraud.

Investigation by our corre-
spondent revealed that the PSC

The said controversial case
of N275.5m was spent be-
tween March 28 and April 11.

the last few days.

The female bomber, who
wore a veil and concealed