

TOP STORIES

120 killed in Kano Central Mosque blasts

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| Kola Oyelere - Kano, Adelowo Oladipo - Minna, Jacob Segun Olatunji and Leon Usigbe - Abuja



- Kano govt mourns
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No fewer than 120 Muslim worshippers were feared killed and hundreds injured following three blasts at the Central Mosque near the Emir's Palace in Kano metropolis on Friday.

The Kano Central Mosque has a capacity of about 10,000 worshippers for Jumat prayers.

There were conflicting figures on the number of casualties but an eyewitness told Saturday Tribune that the dead were not less than 120 although the police claimed 35 people died with 150 injured.

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) quoted an unnamed rescue official as putting the casualty figure as high as 400.

An eyewitness, Alhaji Ahmed Musa, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), that the blasts occurred at about 2.15p.m., a few minutes before congregational prayer.

He said the first blast forced people to scamper for safety but that gunshots were also heard from different directions.

Musa, who was in the mosque when the device exploded, said the scene he witnessed was horrible and pathetic.

He said he saw many people, including the aged, sprawled on the ground after the blast.

He added that another blast was heard within the vicinity of the mosque some minutes later while the deafening sound of gunshots continued.

Another eyewitness said the blasts occurred immediately the Chief Imam called the worshippers to get up for the prayers.

The source explained that two explosions occurred inside the mosque while the third bomb went off also within the premises.

Security operatives, shortly after the blasts, cordoned off the area.

"Many people were moved out of the premises in my presence. They must have died because they were motionless," he said.

When contacted, the JTF spokesman, Captain Eze Ikechukwu, confirmed the blasts.

"Really, there was a bomb blast at the Kano Central Mosque but the details will be made available later," he said.

"Two bombs exploded, one after the other, in the premises of the Grand Mosque seconds after the prayers had started," a witness, Aminu Abdullahi, said, adding that a third went off nearby.

Abdullahi and another witness, Hajara Tukur, who said she lives nearby, said the police fired shots during the chaos that followed the blasts, as worshippers scrambled for safety.

Meanwhile, the police in the state said that 35 people were killed and 150 injured during the blasts.

Deputy Commissioner of Police in the state, Sanusi Lemu, gave the figure when he addressed a press conference late on Friday.

Premium Times reported that shortly after the attacks, hundreds of angry youth took to the streets in protest, pelting police officers and smashing government installations, sparking fears the city may descend into yet another round of religious unrest.

Residents said the youth were angered by the late arrival of soldiers and police at the scene.

According to a witness, the security forces arrived after the gunmen had escaped. The operatives then allegedly opened fire after they were jeered by frustrated worshippers.

"We have taken care of the rioting youths and already we have cordoned up the entire place and for now calm has returned to the city as people do go about their businesses," the police spokesman.

Preaching at Kano's Grand Mosque last week, the emir, Muhammadu Sanusi, urged northerners to take up arms against Islamist group, Boko Haram and cast doubt on the military's ability to protect civilians and end the insurgency.

Kano govt mourns

The Deputy Governor of Kano State, Dr Abdullahi Ganduje, has condoled with the families of those who died during the blasts.

Ganduje expressed the condolences when he spoke with newsmen in Kano on Friday.

Ganduje, who described the incident as very unfortunate, prayed for the quick recovery of those who sustained injuries in the blasts.

He called on the people of the state to continue to pray to God to prevent future occurrence.

"It is unfortunate that the ugly incident is happening when the state has started enjoying relative peace.

"We should continue to pray for the sustenance of peace in our state and the country at large," he said.

Efforts to contact the Commissioner of Police, Mr Aderenle Shinaba, were not successful as he was said to have travelled out of the state for an official engagement.

When contacted, the AIG in charge of Zone One, Alhaji Tambari Yabo, said he could not give the exact figure of the casualties.

However, Captain Ikechukwu said investigation was still going on and that details would be made public as soon as they were available.

Northern Governors condemn bombings

Northern States Governors Forum (NSGF) Chairman and Governor of Niger State, Dr. Mu'azu Babangida Aliyu, has condemned the terror attacks.

Aliyu, in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Israel A. Ebije, expressed sadness at the manner security challenges in the northern states have taken a turn for the worse in recent times.

He said the attack on the mosque was another somber reminder of how much disregard those behind terror attacks in the North have on traditional institutions and on the sanctity of human lives.

He said the position of the Emir of Kano, Alhaji Muhamed Sanusi, on the need to protect communities against those perpetuating violence must remain sacrosanct, adding that nobody should be intimidated by evil perpetrators.

The Chairman of the forum, while commiserating with the government and people of Kano State, urged them to remain committed to fight against terror.

He, however, maintained that the war against terrorism is not an exclusive preserve of security operatives alone.

He said it was time to place everybody under high security alert, adding that strange faces and objects must be promptly reported and investigated.

Aliyu, who decried the continuous turnover in human and material losses on account of terror attack, said the trend must stop by all means necessary. He insisted that Nigerians were not violent people.

PDP mourns, postpones House of Assembly primaries in Kano

The Peoples Democratic Party last night expressed shock over the bomb blasts.

In a statement made available to newsmen in Abuja last night by its National Publicity Secretary, Chief Olisa Metuh, the said that the party was grief-stricken when it received the news of the attacks, considering the fact that the victims were harmless Nigerians who were at the mosque to offer prayers and express their allegiance and love for the Almighty God."

According to the statement, "Indeed, our hearts ache for our brothers and sisters who were slaughtered in these horrible attacks. We grieve for the bereaved, especially those who have been widowed and orphaned today. We share in their sorrows and pray that those behind this atrocious act must not escape justice."

The party lamented that victims of the incessant attacks in the country were productive citizens who were making useful contributions for the growth and development of the nation.

While calling on those behind the attacks to have a rethink and embrace peace, the PDP said the nation would have been a better place if the human and material resources as well as the time and energy wasted as a result of the security challenges were channeled towards national development.

It also urged the citizens not to lose faith but continue to remain vigilant and cooperate with the government and security agencies as they strive to find a lasting solution to the security challenges.

The party, in solidarity with the people of Kano State, has postponed its state House of Assembly primaries slated for today.

The party prayed to God to comfort the bereaved and bring enduring peace to the nation.

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**niko** • 2 days ago

Jonathan. Where are the terrorists?

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**Darandu Okemmuo** • 2 days ago

I STILL REMAIN the ONLY SUPREME POWER TO STOP boko haram evil activities in Nigeria. GEJ Be Warned!. I bet with FG to give 3-6 months to stop boko haram.

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›

**baba** • 2 days ago

My people, Citizens of this great nation Nigeria, we have only one option: standup together and defeat this common enemy of human existence called terrorism. This boko haram insurgence is best described as in the words of Martin Niemoller, when he address the world on the global rampage by Adolf Hitler & his Nazi party , and i quote

"First they came for the Jews and I did not speak out because I was not a Jew. Then they came for the Communists and I did not speak out because I was not a Communist. Then they came for the trade unionists and I did not speak out because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for me and there was no one left to speak out for me."

If we keep quite and relax thinking that our people are not involve in the massacre, or we are either too far away from the region of North Nigeria, then we are missing the whole point, as if not stopped as early as possible, Boko Haram might just overrun the entire nation and set us back to stone age, while we look and gape in utter awe.

So, are you still saying that Boko Haram is a Northern Nigeria affairs/concern?

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›

**John** → baba • 2 days ago

Well Said Bro.. The so called Northern elders knows about this unwholesome activities happening in their own very land.

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›

**CJ** → baba • 2 days ago

Well said Baba! An injury to one is an injury to all! The earlier Boko Haram is sent to the oblivion, the better for Nigeria's territorial integrity!

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



JONATHANISRIGHT • 2 days ago

I think it is a matter of time before Boko Haram killing machine spread across the entire north , and the reason is simple. North instead of supporting the government to fight the insurgency which they created decided to keep quiet and in some cases aiding these terror organization in words and in deeds to annul government counter-insurgency plans . It is unheard off for an emir to ask his people to carry arms and ready to defend themselves . It is a call for anarchy . It is a complete disregard for the law and order of the state. And today BH is testing that hypotheses by attacking the very seat of the emir. Lets hope there will be no anarchy tomorrow because what you will see is people of that region taking up arms to attack innocent people there , doing their legitimate businesses especially the southerners living amongst them .

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



abusmau → JONATHANISRIGHT • 2 days ago

Blabbing. Incoherence. Where is the education?

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Joy → abuasmau • 2 days ago

Don't you think what he said is correct? Just think about it yourself

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

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