

5 killed, 21 injured as suicide bomber targets Gombe mosque

SALIU GBADAMOSI-BAUCHI

A suspected suicide bomber died on Tuesday evening in his attempt to unleash terror on Muslim faithful worshipping in a mosque at Kasuwan Mata by ATC junction at Tudun Wada area of Gombe metropolis.

The *Nigerian Tribune* gathered that the bomber, who was on an explosives-laden motorcycle, was heading for the mosque where worshippers had gathered to observe their Maghrib prayer but the explosives went off before he could get to his target.

Three persons, two male adults and a minor, died on the spot and one other minor died at the Gombe Specialist Hospital out of the 21 hospitalised victims.

It was gathered that the blast affected some urchins

minors, mostly Almajiris, who were said to have concluded their prayers at a nearby mosque.

Confirming the incident, the Gombe State Police Command's Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Fwaje Atajiri, stated that the suicide bomber lost his life in the incident.

The police spokesman, a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), told journalists that the suicide bomber rode on an explosive-laden motorcycle and went towards the mosque, adding that the explosives he was carrying went off before he reached his target.

"The incident happened around Kasuwan Mata area of Gombe, few minutes to 7.00 p.m. He was targeting a mosque but the explosives went off before he could reach his target,"

the PPRO said.

He added that for the intervention of the police and other security men, hoodlums had wanted to take advantage of the situation to loot people's property.

The police image maker warned restive youths to desist from such acts, saying the police in the state were ready to deal decisively with anyone involved.

"The Gombe State police command, under the leadership of CP Kudu Abdullahi Nma, will not tolerate such acts from the public.

"Parents are advised to keep a close watch on their children and wards, as the law will descend heavily on anyone caught causing trouble or trying to loot, as breaking of shops is a criminal offence," Atajiri warned.