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## 21 killed as soldiers attack B'Haram bombers

APRIL 2, 2014 BY FIDELIS SORIWEI, ADELANI ADEPEGBA AND KAYODE IDOWU 74 COMMENTS

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**Director of Defence Information, Maj.-Gen. Chris Olukolade**

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THE Defence Headquarters has said that Special Forces have foiled an attempt by four suicide bombers to blast a Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation facility along the Maiduguri-Dambo Road, Mulai in Borno State on Tuesday.

The four suicide bombers, two other suspected terrorists and 15 civilians died in the incident. Five soldiers, and 17 others were wounded.

The Director of Defence Information, Maj.Gen. Chris Olukolade, who confirmed the incident in an electronic mail, said one of the terrorists was arrested while eight vehicles were destroyed.

He said that three of the four cars laden with Improvised Explosive Devices exploded when soldiers fired at them.

The statement by the DHQ spokesman reads, "Four terrorists believed to be suicide bombers, apparently heading for an NNPC facility along Maiduguri-Dambo Road have died in their IED-laden vehicles.

"The explosions took place at Mulai on the outskirts of Maiduguri. Three of the four explosive-laden vehicles were demobilised by shots fired at them by soldiers at the checkpoint shortly before the explosions that rocked the area.

"Five soldiers were wounded while the civilian casualties have yet to be determined."

He said that the DHQ would give details of the foiled suicide bomb attack later.

In Abuja, *The PUNCH* learnt on Tuesday that the State Security Service might have been directed by the Office of the National Security Adviser to submit to President Goodluck Jonathan, its report on the attempted jailbreak by inmates in its custody on Sunday.

No fewer than 21 suspects died during the incident, which was blamed on the failure of the personnel on duty to observe standard security procedures.

Two operatives were also wounded by the inmates, most of whom are believed to be terror suspects.

A source in the Presidency said, "SSS has started investigating the jailbreak. It is expected to submit the report to the President and the NSA."

It was learnt that the Chief Security Officer to the President and other high ranking security officers in the Presidency visited the SSS headquarters shortly after the incident for a preliminary assessment.

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The *Agence France Presse* reported on Tuesday that the SSS were questioned on how the 21 detainees were killed.

The service has yet to reveal the charges the suspects faced or exactly how they came to be killed.

But the agency's spokeswoman, Marilyn Ogar, told *Raypower 100.5 FM* that "the investigation is still ongoing."

"We will determine who shot who and at what point and how many were shot by whom and for what reason," she added.

The *PUNCH* learnt on Tuesday that the exchange of gunfire was caused by the refusal of the terror suspects to surrender three high calibre weapons they seized from the SSS operatives in their escape bid.

An SSS source said that each of the *Tavor* rifle seized by the suspects, could carry as much as 90 rounds of live ammunition, which if well handled by a marksman, could do great damage to targets.

He said, "The suspects believed they could overwhelm the security personnel on duty with the loaded rifles that they seized from the operatives; and because they were desperate to escape, they were firing sporadically. But they did not succeed because our operatives are trained for such eventuality."

Ogar had said that the guns seized by the inmates had more than 90 rounds of live ammunition.

Meanwhile, the Borno State Governor, Kashim Shettima, on Tuesday traced the emergence of the dreaded Boko Haram sect to bad interpretation of the Holy Qur'an and misconception of Islam.

The governor, who condemned the activities of the sect, said there was no place in the Qur'an where the termination of innocent lives and destruction of property were allowed.

Shettima made the remarks, while receiving members of the Board for Qur'anic Education in the state, who brought winners of the 2014 National Qur'anic Competition to his office.

He noted that the insurgents misinterpreted the Holy Qur'an and Islam, and unleashed terror on Nigerians.

The governor said, "Islam is a religion of peace which does not condone killing and destruction of lives under whatever form.

"Distorted translation of the holy book by the insurgents landed us in this mess, if we have had good understanding of Islam, we would have been in a better state than now.

"There is no room for extremism in Islam. We need to go back to Islam as practised by Prophet Muhammad when Islam encouraged Muslims, Jews and Christians to leave in peace with one another.

"We are currently in a day where some lunatics claiming to be crusaders of Islam are killing innocent people, burning mosques and churches. It is bad interpretation of the holy book by the insurgents that caused all this."

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