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
JUNE 19, 2014 BY JUDE OWUAMANAM AND KAYODE IDOWU WITH AGENCY REPORT 49 COMMENTS

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The football viewing centre and two young survivors... on Wednesday

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At least 21 people were killed in an explosion which ripped through a football viewing centre in Damaturu, Yobe State on Tuesday. *Agence France Presse* quoted a medical source as saying on Wednesday.

"We received 21 dead bodies and 27 injured victims from the blast," said the source at the Sani Abacha Specialist Hospital in Damaturu.

But the Police in the state put the death toll at 14, adding that 26 people were injured.

The medical source, who did not want his name in print because he was not authorised to speak to the media, said soldiers and the police brought in the dead and injured from the scene of the blast to the hospital.

"The bodies are being kept in the morgue while the injured are receiving treatment at the Accident and Emergency Unit before

they will be moved to the ward.

"The victims are young men and children. They have burns, ruptured tissue and bone fractures," said the source.

Reuters reported that it was told by residents of the city that the bomb appeared to have been hidden in a motorised rickshaw outside the venue, where crowds had gathered to watch the World Cup match between Brazil and Mexico.

But the Police in Yobe State said there were about 100 viewers at the scene.

The Public Relations Officer of the state Police command, Nansak Chegwan, said on Wednesday that the police had banned the operation of all viewing centres in the state.

He added that the police had previously advised residents to stay away from such centres because of fears that they could be attacked by terrorists.

Chegwam said, "So far 14 people have been confirmed dead in the blast. Also, we recorded 26 injured persons who are currently receiving treatment at the Sani Abacha General Hospital, Damaturu.

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"We shall give further update as the situation unfolds, but we have asked the residents to stay away from all viewing centres in the state. You will recall that before the commencement of the World Cup, we had advised the youth to keep off such centres."

Meanwhile, Governor Ibrahim Gaidam has described the incident as "heinous, barbaric and totally unjustifiable."

He said the attack was an attempt to make evil to reign over the good.

The governor, in a statement by his Special Adviser on Press Affairs and Information, Mallam Abdullahi Bego, challenged security agents to do more to ensure the protection of life and property.

The statement reads in part, "The governor is deeply saddened by the loss of innocent lives at a time that the good people of the state have stepped up prayers and support and cooperation with security agencies against criminal activities.

"The governor's thoughts are with the families of those who have lost their lives in the attack and those who sustained injuries."

The statement added that the governor, who is currently in Abuja on official engagement, had directed his deputy, Abubakar Ali, to extend his condolences to the families of victims.

Gaidam also directed the Ministry of Health and the Hospitals Management Board to provide free medical services and care for those who sustained injuries in the attack.

He also called on the people of the state not to relent in their support for ongoing efforts to restore peace to the state.

He added, "With prayers, vigilance and continuing support to security agents, the people of the state will surely triumph against the forces of evil that are unleashing mayhem on the innocent."

The deputy governor, who visited the injured in the hospital, condemned the incident.

He urged security agents not to be discouraged by the attack.

He also advised youths in the state to keep off viewing centres.

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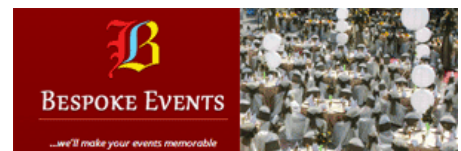
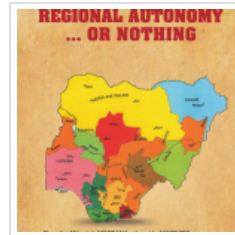
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