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## Female suicide bomber kills 10 in Yobe

FEBRUARY 16, 2015 BY JUDE OWUAMANAM, BAYO AKINLOYE AND KAYODE IDOWU 27 COMMENTS

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**A police station set ablaze by Boko Haram in Kwadam, Gombe State... on Saturday**

| credits: AFP

A female suicide bomber believed to be 10 years old on Sunday struck at the Damaturu Central Motor Park, killing herself and nine other people.

The state Police Command Public Relations Officer, Toyin Gbadegesin, said 31 others were critically injured in the blast which occurred at about 12.20pm.

Gbadegesin explained that the bomber had targeted security personnel on patrol at the park who suspected her movement and turned her away.

He said, "At about 12.10pm, a Hijab-wearing female suicide bomber came into the park

and went to the security vehicle there. She was turned back by our men. She then went to a commercial Volkswagen vehicle that was half-loaded and suddenly, the bomb exploded

"Ten people died and 31 were critically injured. The wounded people are at the Gen. Sani Abatcha Hospital in Damaturu. We have cordoned off the area and investigation is currently ongoing."

When journalists visited the scene of the blast at about 3.30pm on Monday, operatives and men of the state fire service were still battling to put out the fire from the bus.

An eyewitness, Ibrahim Mohammed, said he was the only person close to the scene of the explosion that was not wounded.

"The sound of the explosion was deafening. I was shaken by it and as I talk to you, I am still hearing strange sounds. I suspect the bomber could not have been more than 10 years."

Sunday's blast is the second targeting a densely populated area in Damaturu. The first was last June when nine football fans watching the Brazil 2014 world cup tournament at a viewing centre were killed by a bomber.

Meanwhile, the United States Department of Defence has said there is no discussion between Washington and President Goodluck Jonathan on deployment of American troops in Nigeria.

It however clarified that discussions on troops to combat the Islamist militant group, Boko Haram, was just beginning based on the formation of the Multi-national Joint Task Force.

Jonathan had in an interview with the *Wall Street Journal* on Friday criticised the US for being unwilling to support the Federal Government in fighting insurgents in Nigeria's North-East.

He said the country had in early 2014 reached out to the US for assistance, adding, "Are they (America) not fighting ISIS? Why can't they come to Nigeria? ...they are our friends. If Nigeria has a problem, then I expect

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the US to come and assist us."

But the US Department of Defence spokesman, John Kirby, said, "There is a discussion but it is of a multinational task force that the international community is working with certain African nations to establish. That is right now still in the discussion phase."

"I don't have a timeline for that. But we believe that we support the discussion and dialogue toward establishing a multinational task force that can operate there to help improve partner capacity, to improve counter-terrorism capabilities."

"But these are discussions (that) are really just now starting. I can also tell you that there are no plans as I speak here to send unilaterally, to send or to add US troops into Nigeria. There are no US troops operating in Nigeria."

Kirby, however, noted that the US was not ruling out sending ground forces as part of the multinational task force.

"There's nothing being ruled out or ruled in. These discussions are really just starting. So, I think it'd be premature to say I know exactly what the US component would be or to characterise it. We're just not there, yet," he added.

The United Nations Security Council has condemned "in the strongest terms," the continued escalation of attacks by Boko Haram terrorists on Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon and Niger.

"The members of the Security Council reaffirm that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including the actions of Boko Haram, constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security," it said in statement on Friday night.

It described the attacks as "criminal and unjustifiable," regardless of their motivation.

The council also reiterated its determination to combat all forms of terrorism, in accordance with its responsibilities under the UN Charter.

The UN body also stressed the need to bring perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors of acts of terrorism to justice.

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