

How female suicide bombers attacked IDP camp, NNPC station

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Scenes of the twin blasts which occurred in Maiduguri ...on Saturday. Photos: NAN

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The Nigerian Police on Saturday confirmed that nine persons were killed in two suicide bomb attacks in Maiduguri, the Borno State capital.

The Borno State Commissioner of Police, Damien Chukwu, told journalists that the first incident occurred at the entrance to Bakassi Camp, a camp for Internally Displaced Persons, after the early morning Islamic prayer.

According to Chukwu, a female suicide bomber mingled with a group of people returning from the mosque at a few minutes to seven in the morning.

He said she detonated the bomb, which was strapped to her body, killing her and five others in the process and injuring 15 others.

The police boss said at a distance of about two kilometres away, another female suicide bomber in a tricycle detonated a bomb which claimed her life and that of two others with her in the tricycle.

Chukwu said the bomber had tried to detonate the explosive device near a truck conveying petrol to cause collateral damage but was cut off by an onrushing Peugeot 404 car.

He said though the explosion affected the car, the tanker was saved from what could have been a major disaster.

The National Emergency Management Authority also confirmed the bomb attacks in a statement by its spokesman, Sani Datti, who said **nine persons were killed in the twin explosions** while 24 persons were injured.

Datti, in a text message to our correspondent, explained that the two explosions in Maiduguri occurred at the entrance to Bakassi IDPs camp and the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation filling station along Damboa Road.

He said the agency's rescue team was immediately deployed in the area to evacuate the victims.

One of the commandants of the Civilian Joint Task Force, Abba Ali Kalli, confirmed in a telephone interview with our correspondent that the two incidents happened early on Saturday morning.

Kalli, however, said the number of casualties at the Bakassi camp entrance had yet to be ascertained, adding that the incident at the NNPC depot junction claimed **three lives, including the suicide bomber and two others in a tricycle.**

In another statement, the Nigerian Army, through its spokesman for 7 Division in Maiduguri, Col. Mustapha Anka, confirmed that the incidents occurred simultaneously at about 7.05am on Saturday.

Anka said, "At the Bakassi IDPs camp, a suspected female suicide bomber ran into a group of men and women at the entrance while they were coming out of the camp, killing five men and injured 11 women. The corpses and the injured women have been evacuated.

"At the NNPC, a female suicide bomber followed a fuel tanker in a 'Keke NAPEP' tricycle with the sole aim of gaining entrance to cause maximum damage but was prevented from gaining access to the station by another vehicle. In that process, the suicide bomber detonated the bomb, killing the three passengers of the tricycle. No injured person was reported at this instance."