

HOME / COVER / NATIONAL / 2 SUICIDE BOMBERS DIE IN BORNO



2 suicide bombers die in Borno

•17 others injured •Why NAF acquires aircraft from Pakistan –CAS

From Timothy Olanrewaju, Maiduguri and Oluseye Ojo, Ibadan

Few days after suspected suicide bombers killed scores of persons in a twin attack in Adamawa State, another two suicide bombers targeting a major market in Maiduguri, Borno State, yesterday, blew up themselves. No fewer than seventeen others were reportedly injured in the twin blasts that took place at the Bulabulin area of the Monday market in the heart of Maiduguri at about 8.45am. Residents said the bombers sneaked into the area as traders were commencing business activities and detonated explosive devices. The Commissioner of Police, Damian Chukwu confirmed the attacks after an earlier statement by the police public relations (PPRO), Victor Isuku.

"Two suicide bombers detonated IEDs strapped to their bodies by Monday market roundabout. Seventeen persons sustained various degrees of injuries, and are presently at the specialist hospital. Only the suicide bombers died in the blast," the statement said. Governor Kashim Shettima who visited the scene and the injured at the Accident and Emergency ward of the Maiduguri Specialist Hospital described the incident as unfortunate.

The governor has summoned leaders of markets, motor parks, shopping centers and football fields with heads of security agencies in the state for an emergency security meeting today.

The governor's spokesman, Isa Gusau, said in a statement that the meeting was to reassess the security of the state following yesterday explosions.

"We will be having an emergency security meeting involving management of all the markets, motor parks, shopping centers, football fields and other attack prone areas and we will invite the Civilian JTF and, of course, our security officials so that we cross pollinate ideas and come up with some new measures that will strengthen our existing security structure around markets. We have been taking different steps as the insurgents change their ways, we will all meet and come with measures that will not be made public," the statement said.

Meanwhile, the Chief of Air Staff (CAS), Air Marshal Sadique Abubakar, has revealed the reason the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) decided to acquire Super Mushshak primary trainer aircraft from Pakistan Aeronautical Complex (PAC), and also collaborate with Russia over military equipment.

The CAS told journalists after his one-day operational visit to the 53 NAF Detachment, Ibadan at the weekend, that the decision was prompted by the outcome of threat analyses in the country and the available platform that could be leveraged on to deal with them. The outcome of the threat analyses, according to him, led to the signing of supply and delivery agreement between PAC and NAF five months ago.

NAF took delivery of the first four out of 10 MFI-17 Super Mushshak primary trainer aircraft last week while four additional aircraft are also expected early 2017.

The equipment, Abubakar said, would allow the NAF to improve its training of pilots, thus increasing the capacity of NAF to fight Boko Haram insurgents.

"The NAF has made tremendous progress in platform reactivation, training and welfare of personnel," he said.

"The acquisition of military equipment, by and large, is determined by the outcome of threat analyses. If you do your threat analyses and you understand that there is a need to have such and such platform, and that the platform is in the south, north, east or the west, you'll go for it. And that is exactly what we are doing," he stated.

He restated that the dreaded Boko Haram insurgents have been decimated.

"The kind of challenges where there would be large convoy of vehicles of Boko Haram insurgents, moving from one village to the other, killing people and burning houses, is not likely going to happen again. Certainly, it is not going to happen.

"It is a common knowledge that what is happening in the North East in terms of security challenges has actually been substantially addressed. What we are seeing are suicide bombings from time to time, though very tragic and unfortunate.

"We may still have isolated cases, which exist in all insurgencies, because these are people that melt within communities and societies. It is very difficult to rule out isolated cases. It is not only in Nigeria, but every part of the world," the NAF boss said.

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