

# 25 Feared Killed As Explosion Rocks Mining Site In Niger State



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More bodies have reportedly been recovered from the scene of yesterday morning's explosion at a mining site in Sabon Pegi in Mashegun Local Government Area of Niger State, bringing the total to 25.

An unspecified number of people are said to have suffered various degrees of injuries and are in critical condition, receiving treatment at various hospitals in New Bussa.

The search and rescue operation is still ongoing, as more people, including women and children, are said to be missing or buried under the rubble. Over 50 per cent of residential buildings and shops in the village have been reduced to rubble due to the explosion.

An additional source from the village suggested that the explosive devices may have been stored in a shop a few meters from the mining site.

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A middle-aged man, simply identified as Yushau, based in New Bussa, was said to have stored the explosive devices he deals in at his uncle's house, which he uses as a shop in Sabon Pegi.

According to our source, Yushau has taken to his heels and gone into hiding after the explosion. Meanwhile, the military has cordoned off the area even as the villagers continue searching for more bodies. However, reacting, the Police said only one person and six others were injured in the incident.

The Police Public Relations Officer in Niger, SP Wasiu Abiodun, who confirmed the incident to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Minna yesterday, said the explosion, which occurred at about 7:30 am, was reportedly caused by dynamite kept in the area by a suspect for mining activity. Abiodun said the blast affected about 12 houses in the area and caused widespread destruction.