

19 die as Muslims celebrate Eid-el-Kabir

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...Wamakko, Sultan others task Nigerians on peaceful coexistence

No fewer than 19 people were killed in two [separate auto-crashes](#) in Ilorin, the Kwara State capital during this year's Sallah celebration. Three people were burnt to ashes Friday morning in the state capital while 16 others died in a separate multiple crash involving a trailer and a commuter bus at [Osin River Community](#), a suburb of Ilorin at the beginning of the festivity on Wednesday.

Kwara State Sector Commander of the FRSC, Ola Ademoluti, confirmed the incident, saying that the [three people were burnt to ashes on Sallah morning in Ilorin](#).

It was also gathered that a 10-year-old boy survived Wednesday's crash as he was rescued under the wreckage of the vehicles some hours after the tragic incident.

Witnesses said that the commuter bus was conveying passengers who were returning to [Gbadamu-Oloji village in Ilorin East Local Government Area](#) from [Oke-Oyi Market](#) where they had gone to shop in preparation for the Eid-el-Kabir celebration, pointing out that the accident occurred when the driver of the trailer lost control of the vehicle while descending a [slope](#) at high speed.

The eyewitness said that the trailer crushed the commuter bus while maneuvering through the rough part of the spot as it descended the slope.

However, FRSC Commader Adeyemi confirmed that the remains of the victims had been deposited at the University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital, UITH, Ilorin.

On the crash involving the petrol tanker, eye witnesses told Saturday Vanguard that [brake failure](#) caused the incident as the tanker rammed into the taxi cab around Oke Oyi, near the NNPC depot, which caught fire as the content spilled.

However, reports from across the country showed that there was peaceful celebration even as the former President Shehu Shagari, Governors Aliyu Wamakko of Sokoto State and Kashim Shettima, Sultan Sa'ad Abubakar and Ambassador Shehu Malami, Governors Babatunde Fashola, Mauzu Babangida Aliyu, Ibikunle Amosun and the ACN leader, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu were among prominent Nigerians who prayed yesterday to mark this year's Eid-el-Kabir celebration.

Others included former Minister of Mines and Power, Muhammed Ahmed Gusau and his counterpart in Ministry of Culture, Senator Bello Jibrin Gada.



Muslims praying at Agege Prayer Ground, Lagos as part of activities marking the Eid-Kabir Celebration. Photo By Diran Oshe

However, contrary to wide speculations by the Joint Task Force JTF in Maiduguri and Damaturu, the Borno and Yobe state capitals that the Boko Haram sect will launch massive attacks before, during and after the Sallah, there was a peaceful celebration in both states with massive turn out of Muslim faithfuls at their various Eid el Kabir praying grounds.

In some of the praying grounds in Maiduguri and Damaturu cities, it was observed that Muslims performed their prayers without any hitches.

Most of those who went out to pray however, rushed back to their homes soon after, in places like Gomari Airport, Bulumkutu, Polo, Damboa road, Ramat Square among others in Maiduguri. Prayers at Jere local Government Areas of Borno state started at about 8:30am.

Islamic leaders in their messages on the occasion, urged Nigerians, particularly Muslims to pray for peaceful coexistence in the country and the world at large.

In a message signed by his Special Assistant on Press Affairs, Abubakar Dangusau, Wamakko called on the people to be steadfast in the worship of God.

"The Muslim Ummah should strengthen the ties of kinship and imbibe the spirit of sacrifice which Eid-el-kabir symbolises," he added.

Also in his own message delivered in his palace yesterday, by the Magajin garin Sokoto, Alhaji Rilwanu Bello, Sultan Abubakar urged Nigerians, especially northerners and their governors, to intensify efforts on total eradication of polio in the country.

He further admonished Muslims to be committed to the payment of Zakat, stressing that "such monies are used in feeding widows, orphans and the indigent people in the society."

The Sultan commended Governor Wamakko for building a general hospital in each of the 23 local government Councils of the State.

The Shehu of Borno, Alhaji Abubakar Garbai Ibn Elkanemi who paid his Sallah homage to Governor Kashim Shettima at the Government House thanked him for his efforts in uplifting the traditional and religious institutions, even as he prayed Allah to restore peace to the state.

In Minna, the Niger State Governor, Dr. Babangida Aliyu assured that he would continue to run an inclusive, transparent and accountable administration in a bid to ensure a more prosperous state that would be the home of pride, happiness and fulfilment for present and future generations.

According to him, "We pledge our loyalty to a partnership and relationship of mutual respect aimed at facilitating the development of Niger State. We reassure you of our determination to continue to run an inclusive, transparent and accountable administration in our drive towards achieving a more prosperous Niger state that will be a home of pride, happiness and fulfillment for the present and future generations.

"May I use this opportunity to appeal to all Nigerlites and indeed all Nigerians to give peace a chance in the spirit of this season, and to devote this period to extra-ordinary prayers for the peace, security and prosperity of our dear state and nation, rather than engaging in rumour mongering, wishful thinking and politicization of every issue to the detriment of peaceful and harmonious co-existence.

"We should therefore imbibe the lessons of Eid-el-Kabir, which reinforce the spirit of kindness, piety, liberation and commitment to duty, as well as the promotion of religious harmony and peaceful co-existence, as we celebrate."

He then admonished all those angling for elective and appointive political office in 2015 to leave the race to Allah who is the only one that knows who will become what at any particular time.

"We believe infinitely that Allah's will on 2015 and indeed every issue will come to pass, we should therefore avoid utterances and actions that will create unnecessary rancor and animosity between us. Let us leave the future to Allah," he added.

Also in Lagos State, Governor Babatunde Fashola of Lagos state and his predecessor, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu among other clerics asked Nigerians to eschew violence and embrace peace for the development of the country.

Fashola, however, said that the ongoing enforcement of the new road traffic law restricting operation of commercial motorcycle operators popularly called Okada from the metropolis was not responsible for the traffic gridlock experienced across the state.



PRESIDENT GOODLUCK JONATHAN WITH VICE PRESIDENT NAMADI SAMBO (L) AND SOME OF THE CHILDREN WHO WERE PART OF THE SALLAH HOMAGE TO THE PRESIDENT IN ABUJA ON FRIDAY

They spoke after the rikat prayer at the Dodan Barracks praying ground, Lagos, adding that living in peace and harmony is the key to the country's fast prosperity.

Fashola emphasized sacrifice as enjoined by preachers was for everyone to have harmonious peaceful coexistence.

According to him, the sacrifice required from "Nigerians is to continue to coexist in peace, love and tolerance and restrain from our diversity. And when we understand our diversity, really it gives us the strength and harmony with which we can proceed forward as a people."

Tinubu on his own said, "It's only under the atmosphere of peace that everyone in this country can prosper and the country can achieve its set goals which will make it ranked among the first 10 countries in the world."

On the traffic, Fashola explained "What has happened is that there is high movement of people three days before the celebration. This is because people are travelling in and out of the state. Many marketers have imported rice and other foodstuffs required for the celebration. And all these are moved on the same roads and the roads will never expand because of the season. Couple with that, there has been fuel scarcity in the country.

"So motorists have to also queue in different filling stations and restricting other commuters to one lane or no lane. And these were the things that our traffic officers have been managing to ensure that residents of the state have free flow of traffic," he added.

Speaking in his sermon, the Chief Imam of Lagos Central Mosque, Alh. Garba Akinola urged Nigerians to donate relief materials to flood victims, saying "this will help to reduce the plight of the victims and make them celebrate the festival like every other person in the country."

At Ogun State, Governor Ibikunle Amosun solicited understanding, tolerance and peaceful co-habitation among Nigerians. Amosun, who spoke in Abeokuta shortly after the Eid prayer held at the Lantoro Praying Ground, pointed out that Nigeria could only thrive when all Nigerians eschew violence and embrace peace and unity.

He also urged Muslims across the country to emulate the teachings of Prophet Muhammed and Prophet Ibrahim's total submission to the will of God which led to the festival.

The governor urged Nigerians to steer clear of any act that threatens the unity of the country. He said: "no state or country will benefit and progress with crisis, we should therefore, eschew violence and embrace peace".

Earlier, the Chief Imam of Egbaland, Alhaji Liadi Orunsolu, who led the Eid prayer, enjoined Muslim faithful and all mankind to fear Allah as demonstrated by Prophet Ibrahim in the Holy books.

Alhaji Orunsolu disclosed that the annual slaughter of rams by Muslims all over the world was not for sacrifice and celebration alone, but for fear of God and utmost respect for human creator. He added that man, particularly Muslims should not involve in anything that can incur the wrath of God against him.