

# News

**FG yet to get official notice on UK visa £3,000 bond**

BY VICTORIA OJEME

**A**BUJA—MINISTER of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Olugbenga Ashiru, yesterday, said the Federal Government was yet to receive any official statement from its British counterpart over the 3,000 Pounds Sterling cash bond for first-time visa applicants from Nigeria and five other Commonwealth countries.

The other countries are India, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

A statement by the ministry's spokesperson, Ogbale Ode, said: "Federal Government has already conveyed its objection to the bond payment to the UK government, when the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Olugbenga Ashiru, summoned the British High Commissioner to Nigeria, Mr. Andrew Pocock, to Tafawa Balewa House on June 25.

"If and when a communication to that effect is received, Federal Government will take appropriate steps to reflect its national interest."

## Kano blast: JTF, Ohanaeze, hospital disagree on casualties

BY ABDULSALAM MUHAMMAD & BEN AGANDE

**K**ANO—THE casualty figures from the multiple blasts that rocked the predominantly Christian quarters in Kano, Monday evening, has increased to 45 dead, according to Ohanaeze Ndigbo, Kano.

Briefing newsmen on the development in Kano, yesterday, Chairman, Kano chapter of the pan-Igbo socio-cultural organisation, Chief Tobias Idika, said: "We counted 45 dead bodies and they have all been deposited at the morgue for identification by relations."

"We have records and proof of what we are talking about. I participated in the rescue operations and I am best informed to tell the world what happened regarding the deaths and the injured."

He revealed that 15 people were injured during the blast, adding that the injured were on admission at various government hospitals in the metropolis.

He described the attack "as one too many on members of the guest community doing their legitimate business in the city and contributing to its growth.

"It is high time those in position of authority rose to stem the tide."

Idika commended the decision of the state government to take care of the medical bill of the injured.

He, however, expressed

● Attack won't affect our work—Boko Haram C'ttee



**SURVIVORS:** Mr. Emeka Mba, Manager, New Tarzan Motors (left) and Mr. Emeka Ani, survivors of the Kano bomb blast, in hospital.

skepticism on the sincerity of the pledge "in the light of previous experiences where such victims were left on their own after the profit making statement on camera.

"We have seen this kind of promises in the past that start and end in camera, and it is our hope this kind of promises by the governor will be translated into concrete action for the benefit of mankind."

**12 died—JTF**

Contesting the casualty figure in a statement, the Joint Military Task Force said: "At 9 p.m. on July 29, sounds of simultaneous explosion were

shows that three out of this figure are female.

"We also have in the hospital 10 injured persons that are being attended to by our team of expert. We are doing our best to save lives, and we therefore call for understanding."

He denied reports that the hospital authorities refused to release corpses to relation for interment.

He said: "This is an organization. We have a process and we always ensure that it is followed to the letter to avoid backlash, and this is the best practice all over the world."

and Peaceful Resolution of Security Challenges in the North by two months to allow it complete its assignment.

### Boko Haram C'ttee reacts

This is coming on the heels of assertion by chairman of the committee and Minister of Special Duties, Tanimu Kabiru, that despite the bomb blast in Kano State that claimed scores of lives, the committee will continue its assignment.

Speaking with State House correspondents after collecting the letter of extension yesterday, Tanimu said that the