

Ibadan explosion: Police declare owners of building wanted



- Okada rider rented twin duplex in Bodija —Landlords
- Casualty figure rises to 5, residents flee blast area
- Oyo Assembly reveals alleged miner behind explosion
- Mining company behind blast, not our member —MAN; vows to unravel perpetrators

By Laolu Elijah, Gabriel Ewepu & Adeola Badru

IBADAN—landlords Association of Adeyi Street, in Bodija, Ibadan, Oyo State, the epicenter of Tuesday's explosion, yesterday, disclosed that the register of tenants in the estate showed that the twin duplex was rented by one Mahmoud Camara. Also, the Oyo State House of Assembly has disclosed the identity of the person behind the explosion that rocked Ibadan as Sawani Yusuf.

This came as the Oyo State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Adebola Hamzat, declared wanted the two occupants of the epicentre of the explosion.

Also, the casualty figure in the explosion has risen to five.

Three bodies were pulled out of the rubble between Tuesday and Wednesday, while two more were brought out yesterday.

Meanwhile, the Miners Association of Nigeria, MAN, yesterday, declared that the mining company allegedly behind the explosion in Ibadan is not their member.

The MAN Board of Trustees, BoT, and National Executive Council, NEC, equally vowed to unravel those behind the Tuesday night explosion.

At about 7.44 pm, on January 16, a loud explosion was heard in different parts of Ibadan leading to panic and confusion.

Okada rider rented a twin duplex in Bodija

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Landlord associationAn executive member of the landlord association in the area, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said the register of tenants in the estate showed that the twin duplex was rented by one Mahmoud Camara.

Vanguard gathered that the person whose name was used to rent the apartment in the highbrow Bodija is a commercial motorcyclist popularly called Okada rider. He rented houses 8A and 8B in the area.

Mr Bayo Busari, a lawyer, who was featured on a radio programme, said: "That guy, an okada man, who rented the house is used as a decoy if you look at the kind of business he does."

It was further revealed that three occupants were living in the apartment before the explosion.

Two of them, according to findings, are Malians while the third is a Nigerian.

When Vanguard visited the scene yesterday, it was discovered that some people were still missing.

A woman, Mama Ayo, said she had been calling her sister, who lives in the area but she had not heard anything from her.

At the scene of the explosion, two buildings sank due to the impact of the blast.

Residents flee explosion area

Meanwhile, most residents, who live far from the scene of the blast, have started leaving the area in droves.

Houses of some of those living in the area had minimal damage.

Glasses of their windows and doors are merely shattered while their buildings are still intact.

A woman, who was visibly traumatised, was seen moving her belongings out of a building that is about 500 metres away from the epicentre.

Oyo govt gives update on explosion

While giving the update, the Special Adviser on Security Matters to the governor, Mr Fatai Owoseni, said: "Rescue operation is still ongoing. As of yesterday, we had three casualties but this morning (Thursday), I got information from the security operatives supporting the medical team that two more dead bodies were recovered."

Police declare occupants of exploded building wanted

As a result of the explosion, the Oyo State Commissioner of Police, Mr Adebola Hamzat, has declared the two occupants of the epicentre of the explosion.

Giving an update on the explosion, he declared the suspects wanted after going round to assess the extent of damage in the area.

According to him, two men in the affected building have been declared missing.

The CP, however, did not give the names of the two men or display their pictures. One of the residents of the area, who preferred anonymity, said two men came into the building on a motorcycle and hurriedly left before the explosion. Oyo Assembly reveals name of alleged miner behind Ibadan explosion Similarly, the Oyo State House of Assembly has disclosed that one Sawani Yusuf was responsible for the explosion.

While the nationality of the alleged suspect remains unconfirmed, the Assembly urged security agencies to intensify efforts at bringing all connected to the explosion to book.

Speaking during plenary, Majority Leader of the House, Sanjo Adedoyin, disclosed the identity of the foreigner whose property allegedly housed the explosive device.

The deliberation followed a motion presented to the House by Adebayo Babajide, representing Ibadan North II.

The lawmakers, in their separate submissions, lamented the explosion just as they called on government and security agencies to expand their investigation net to ensure that no stone was left unturned to address the aftermath of the explosion.

While urging security agencies to embark on intelligence gathering to identify residences of other possible illegal miners and expatriates, the House further appealed to all regulatory agencies to enforce safety precautions, especially in handling and storing explosives (dynamites), among others.

In his remark, the Speaker, Adebo Ogundoyin said: “We can discuss different angles to how the situation affects us and different solutions as to ensuring that this situation never occurs again but for now let us wait for the outcome of the security investigation to shed more light on the happenings.

“As soon as we have more information I’m sure we’ll be able to deliberate further as to the next action move.

“We also want the Ministry of Environment to look at the state Environmental Laws to see whether or not there are consequences for such actions that have happened and if there are not, then there are lacunas in the laws and we have to take immediate steps towards that.”

Mining company behind blast, not our member —MAN

Meanwhile, the Miners Association of Nigeria, MAN, yesterday, declared that the mining company allegedly behind the explosion in Ibadan on Tuesday night is not their member.

In a chat with Vanguard, the National President of MAN, ‘Dele Ayanleke, said the mining company referred to as the organisation that illegally and allegedly stored the