



Pic 1.1 : Map of Nigeria

BACKGROUND

- The recent bomb explosions highlight the ongoing security challenges posed by insurgency-related attacks involving improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and suicide bombings in North-Eastern Nigeria, particularly in Maiduguri, Borno State. These attacks are mainly carried out by extremist groups, including Boko Haram and its offshoot, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), which often target locations with high civilian presence such as markets, places of worship, farming communities, and transportation hubs.
- Boko Haram originated in Maiduguri, making the city the focal point of the insurgency that began in 2009. Although the frequency of large-scale attacks had declined in recent years, the December 2025 bombing at a crowded mosque, which killed five people and injured 35 others, demonstrated that the threat remains and highlighted the potential for renewed attacks in urban areas.
- Between 2014 and 2025, repeated suicide bombings across the northeast resulted in thousands of casualties, with marketplaces in Maiduguri consistently identified as high-risk locations due to large crowds and limited security measures. Although intensified counterinsurgency operations by the Nigerian military have degraded the operational capacity of insurgent groups in recent years, sporadic attacks particularly suicide bombings continue to expose gaps in intelligence, surveillance, and urban security management.

INCIDENT PROFILE

On 16 March 2026, a coordinated suicide bombing attack occurred at Monday Market in Maiduguri LGA, Borno State. The attack resulted in the deaths of twenty-three (23) individual, while one hundred and eight (108) people sustained varying degrees of injuries. The explosions reportedly caused widespread panic, as traders and civilians rushed to evacuate the area. The injured victims were taken to the hospital for medical treatment.

Preliminary investigations revealed that the explosions struck several key public locations, including the General Post Office, the bustling Monday Market, and the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital, all of which were heavily populated at the time of the attack, thereby amplifying the scale and impact of the incident.

Emergency responders, including security personnel and medical teams, were promptly deployed to evacuate victims and secure the affected areas. However, these developments highlight critical gaps in the protection of high-risk public spaces and highlight the urgent need to strengthen both preventive security measures and emergency response capacities, particularly in densely populated urban centres vulnerable to coordinated attacks.



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RISK ANALYSIS

The resurgence of suicide bombing attacks in Maiduguri highlights the ongoing threat posed by insurgent groups and reveals critical vulnerabilities in densely populated public spaces, particularly markets such as Monday Market. These locations remain high-risk due to heavy civilian traffic and limited preventive security measures, increasing the likelihood of future attacks.

Repeated attacks on major markets could potentially disrupt supply chains, reduce the availability of essential commodities, and drive hike in food prices. Prolonged disruptions may significantly affect household access to food and exacerbate existing vulnerabilities among low-income populations. Such incidents also heighten fear and undermine public confidence in safety within communal spaces, leading to reduced social and economic activities, weakening community cohesion, and exposing residents to further risks.

The impact on health security is substantial, as mass casualty incidents place additional strain on healthcare systems with already weak capacity. Beyond immediate physical injuries, survivors and affected communities are at risk of long-term psychological effects, including trauma and anxiety, which could affect overall community well-being. The recent attack could also negatively impact education, as persistent insecurity may disrupt access to schools, particularly in urban areas prone to such incidents. Fear of further explosions and violence, combined with economic hardship from disrupted livelihoods, could lead to reduced school attendance.

In addition, the incident has heightened fear among residents in high-risk areas, which could place additional pressure on host communities and limited humanitarian resources, particularly in the provision of shelter, food, healthcare, and other essential services. The attack also has implications for security governance, as repeated incidents could erode trust in security institutions and highlight gaps in intelligence gathering, surveillance, and coordination among relevant agencies.

MECHANISMS FOR INTERVENTION

- In response to these attacks, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu condemned the incident as an act of terrorism and ordered the deployment of security chiefs and reinforcements to Maiduguri to take control of the situation and prevent further attacks. Security presence has since been heightened across the city, and investigations are ongoing. Security operatives, including the Nigerian Army, Nigeria Police Force, and other agencies, were deployed to the scene to secure the area and prevent further attacks.
- Emergency response efforts were swiftly activated, with local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as agencies such as the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), mobilizing to provide first aid, trauma care, and life-saving assistance to victims both at the scene and in hospitals.
- The Nigeria Governors' Forum condemned the attacks, describing them as shocking and despicable, and expressed solidarity with the government and people of Borno State while calling for intensified efforts to prevent further incidents.
- The Governor of Yobe State, Mai Mala Buni, consoled with the government and people of Borno State, as well as the families of those affected by the recent multiple bomb explosions in Maiduguri, Borno State. As part of efforts to support the victims, the Yobe State Government announced a donation of ₦10 million to assist the affected families.



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- State authorities are collaborating with community leaders to strengthen vigilance, improve information sharing, and enhance early warning systems within local communities, reflecting broader efforts by Nigerian stakeholders to involve traditional leaders and grassroots networks in security and early warning initiatives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Federal and State Governments should strengthen security infrastructure around high-risk public spaces, including markets, through the deployment of screening systems, surveillance technology, and increased security personnel.
- The Federal Government, through the Nigerian military and other security agencies, should enhance intelligence gathering and early warning systems to detect and prevent planned attacks.
- The Federal and State Governments should ensure that emergency management agencies improve rapid response capacity, including ambulance services and trauma care support, particularly in high-risk areas.
- State Government, in collaboration with community leader, religious leaders and Civil Society Organizations, should intensify public awareness campaigns on identifying suspicious activities and reporting mechanisms through community policing to support early detection and response.

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