

# Soldiers, terrorists clash leaves many dead in Borno

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| By Isah Ojo

Troops of Operation Hadin Kai on Tuesday clashed with fleeing terrorists in Borno State, leading to the deaths of an unspecified number of fighters from both sides.

The encounter followed a clearance operation conducted by the troops across several terrorist strongholds, including Tergejeri, Chiralia, and the Ajigin/Abirma general areas of the Timbuktu Triangle.

Confirming the development in a statement on Wednesday, the Media Information Officer of the Joint Task Force North-East, Operation Hadin Kai, Lt. Col. Sani Uba, said many terrorists were neutralised during the operation.

He said troops had sustained their advance into the Timbuktu Triangle, recording significant operational gains and further degrading terrorist networks operating in the area.

“In the latest phase of the operations, troops successfully cleared and dominated key terrorist locations within the Timbuktu Triangle, including Tergejeri, Chiralia, and the Ajigin/Abirma general areas,” Uba said.

According to him, troops made intermittent contact with fleeing terrorist elements during the operation and engaged them with heavy volumes of fire, resulting in the neutralisation of several terrorists.

He further disclosed that on January 20, 2026, while consolidating at a harbour area about six kilometres north of Chiralia, troops encountered two Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices

(VBIEDs).

“Through vigilance and swift action, one VBIED was successfully neutralised. The second, however, breached the defensive position, affecting some logistics platforms,” he said.

“In the course of this attack, some gallant soldiers and members of the Civilian Joint Task Force paid the supreme price, while others sustained injuries.”

Uba said the wounded personnel were promptly evacuated by Nigerian Army Aviation helicopters to the 7 Division Medical Services and Hospital.

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He added that Nigerian Air Force platforms from the Air Component, working in synergy with Nigerian Army air assets, provided continuous overwatch during the evacuation to ensure the safe extraction of casualties and the security of ground forces, while more terrorists were neutralised.

In a further indication of the heavy losses suffered by the terrorists, he said troops later discovered mass graves containing an estimated 20 terrorist bodies killed during encounters in the Timbuktu Triangle and buried by their cohorts.

“This discovery exposes the scale of terrorist casualties and further discredits terrorist propaganda narratives,” he said.

Uba noted that the security situation across the theatre remained generally stable, with troops’ morale and fighting efficiency high, as sustained pressure continued on fleeing terrorist elements.

“Troops of Operation Hadin Kai remain resolute in their commitment to protect civilians, dismantle terrorist networks, and restore lasting peace and security across the North-East,” the statement concluded.

The development comes days after troops of Operation Hadin Kai uncovered an underground Boko Haram logistics storage facility stocked with medical supplies, fuel, and other critical materials after overrunning several terrorist enclaves in the Timbuktu Triangle area of Borno State.

According to the military, the discovery followed coordinated, intelligence-led offensives conducted across Chiralia, Garin Faruk, and Abirma, during which troops also repelled multiple drone attacks launched by the terrorists.

Uba said items recovered during the operations included Baofeng radios, mobile phones, five AK-47 magazines, several rounds of 7.62×39mm special ammunition, 7.62mm NATO belted ammunition, Boko Haram and ISWAP flags, links of 12.7×108mm ammunition, diesel-powered grinding machines, large quantities of medical supplies, bags of grains, a pick-up truck, an underground logistics storage facility, and petroleum and oil lubricant dumps.

*He said the recoveries further degraded the operational and logistical capacity of the terrorists.*