

Soldiers kill three terrorists in Sokoto forest, recover weapons

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File photo: Terrorists

By Animashaun Salman

Troops of the Nigerian Army under Operation FANSAN YAMMA have killed three suspected terrorists during a fierce gun battle with a criminal network in Kadam Forest in Tangaza Local Government Area of Sokoto State.

The operation, conducted by troops of the Chief of Army Staff Special Intervention Battalion 7 in collaboration with the 8 Division Strike Team, followed intelligence reports that a large group of armed fighters had gathered inside the forest to coordinate attacks and kidnappings in surrounding communities.

The Nigerian Army confirmed the development in a statement released on Monday by the Acting Deputy Director, Army Public Relations, 8 Division, Lt. Col. Olaniyi Osoba.

Osoba said the troops launched the operation after receiving credible intelligence that more than 100 terrorists had converged in the forest.

He said, “The operation was initiated following credible intelligence indicating that over 100 terrorists had converged deep within Kadam Forest to coordinate attacks and kidnappings on local communities and transport their kidnapped victims to their strongholds.”

According to him, troops swiftly mobilised and made contact with the terrorists around 12 noon, leading to an intense firefight.

“The ensuing firefight was fierce and sustained. When the terrorists attempted a rear-flanking manoeuvre, troops responded with superior firepower, effectively neutralising the threat and maintaining tactical dominance throughout the engagement,” he said.

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Osoba added that subsequent clearance operations in the forest confirmed the killing of three terrorists, while several others escaped with suspected gunshot wounds. He said troops also recovered a cache of weapons and equipment from the scene.

Items recovered include one PKT machine gun, two AK-47 rifles, 350 rounds of PKT ammunition, 111 rounds of 7.62mm special ammunition, three magazines, two communication radios, three motorcycles and a mobile phone.

“Follow-on operations are ongoing to confirm additional enemy casualties and recover further materiel,” Osoba said. He added that troop morale remained high, stressing that the operation demonstrated the effectiveness of intelligence-driven joint security operations in disrupting terrorist activities in the North-West.

“Aggressive patrols and sustained offensive operations continue across the general area to exploit this success, disrupt fleeing terrorist elements and prevent their regrouping,” he said.

Sokoto State, particularly border communities in Tangaza, Gudu, and Illela Local Government Areas, has witnessed increasing attacks by armed groups in recent months.

Security agencies have linked many of the attacks to members of the Lakurawa terror network, which is believed to operate across the Nigeria–Niger border and use dense forests as operational bases.

The military has intensified operations under Operation FANSAN YAMMA to dismantle the group's camps, rescue kidnapped victims, and restore security across the North-West region.