

OPWS troops kill suspected kidnapper, recover AK-47 in Benue anti-kidnap operation

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From Scholastica Hir, *Makurdi*

Troops of the Joint Task Force Operation Whirl Stroke (OPWS) have neutralised a suspected kidnapper and recovered an AK-47 rifle during an operation at Jotar Village near the Quarantine Checkpoint in Benue State.

The operation, carried out on July 2, 2026, followed credible intelligence on the activities of suspected kidnappers in the area.

According to a statement issued by the Acting Media Information Officer of OPWS, Lieutenant Ahmad Zubairu, acting on the information, troops stationed at Kyado swiftly mobilised to the location to thwart the planned criminal operation.

He said troops engaged the armed suspects in a fierce gun battle upon arrival at the scene and one of the suspected criminals was killed during the exchange, while troops recovered one AK-47 rifle and two empty magazines.

The statement added that preliminary indications suggest the deceased may have belonged to the gang responsible for the attack on commuters along the route on July 1, during which a former Secretary to the Benue State Government sustained gunshot injuries.

The Force Commander of OPWS, Major General Moses Gara, commended the troops for their courage, resilience and professionalism, urging them to sustain aggressive patrols and maintain pressure on criminal elements operating within the joint operations area.

He also lauded the cooperation among security agencies, noting that intelligence sharing and inter-agency collaboration remain critical to restoring peace and security across the region.

The Force Commander reaffirmed OPWS' commitment to protecting lives and property and called on residents to continue providing timely and credible information to security agencies, assuring them that all intelligence received would be treated confidentially and acted upon promptly.