

Soldier, vigilante die as troops rescue abducted NECO candidates in Borno

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 Rescued-Borno-students-780×470

From **Timothy Olanrewaju** Maiduguri and **Jude Owuamanam**, Jos

Troops of Operation HADIN KAI (OPHK) have rescued 10 candidates sitting for the National Examinations Council (NECO) and their teachers abducted during an ISWAP attack on Lassa Community in Askira Uba Local Government Area of Borno State.

The attack, which occurred at about 9a.m. yesterday, targeted the Technical Secondary School while the students were writing their examination.

Acting Military Information Officer Headquarters Joint Task Force North East Operation HADIN KAI, Maiduguri, Capt. Mohammed Goni, said in a statement on Monday that immediately upon the receipt of the incident, the theatre command scrambled both strike and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) aircrafts from the Air Component of OPHK to support troops mobilised to the area for a coordinated search and rescue operation.

According to him, the troops, with support from the air platforms overhead providing guidance, made contact around Daggu and after the firefight, the victims were rescued unhurt and are currently receiving the necessary care and support.

He said one soldier of OPHK and a member of the Civilian Joint Task Force were killed while efforts were ongoing to rescue the remaining victim and bring the perpetrators to justice.

“During the contact, troops out maneuvered the fleeing terrorists inflicting casualties on them and capturing seven of their motorcycles, significantly disrupting their escape.

Regrettably, during the intense firefight, one gallant soldier of OPHK and a member of the Civilian Joint Task Force made the supreme sacrifice during the intense exchange of fire with the terrorists.

“Their courage, selflessness and unwavering commitment exemplify the collective resolve of security forces and local volunteers who continue to risk their lives daily to protect innocent citizens and restore peace across the North East.

“In collaboration with other security agencies and relevant stakeholders, troops have intensified operations and sustained pressure on the terrorist elements responsible for the attack.

“Security measures across the affected area have also been reinforced to protect vulnerable communities, safeguard schools and prevent any recurrence.”

Goni said the incident further underscored the desperation of terrorist groups who, faced with sustained pressure from ongoing military operations, had resorted to attacking soft targets and vulnerable members of society in a futile attempt to sustain their campaign of terror.

However, he said that such cowardly acts would neither deter OPHK's resolve nor diminish its commitment to dismantling terrorist networks and restoring lasting peace and security across the North East.