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## Nigeria: JTF 'Kills 12 Boko Haram Suspects in Shootout'

BY HAMZA IDRIS AND YAHAYA IBRAHIM, 14 FEBRUARY 2012

Maiduguri — Officials of the Joint Task Force (JTF) in Borno State and members of the Boko Haram yesterday differed on the number of casualties suffered by both sides, following a deadly encounter at Budun area of Maiduguri metropolis on Sunday night.

Spokesman for Boko Haram Abul Qaqa said in a teleconference in Maiduguri yesterday that his group killed 12 soldiers when they launched an ambush on JTF operatives at Budun on Sunday.

But JTF spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Mohammed Hassan, who also spoke on phone debunked the claim, insisting that it was the JTF that killed 12 members of the Boko Haram during the encounter.

"Our men had a gun duel with suspected Boko Haram members and we have killed 12 of them. Two of our members sustained minor injuries and are now receiving treatment in a hospital," the JTF spokesman said.

The Boko Haram spokesman also threatened that they would launch attacks on offices and installations of GSM service providers across the country.

He alleged that the GSM operators—MTN, Airtel and Glo—were conniving with security operatives in revealing call log data of Boko Haram members which was leading to the tracking down of the sect members.

"We are also issuing similar threat to the Nigeria Communication Commission (NCC) for given directives to GSM operatives to release information on our movements," Qaqa said.

Qaqa, who acknowledged that security operatives had re-arrested the alleged Christmas Day bomber, Kabiru Sokoto, said the development will not in any way deter them from launching fresh attacks.

Musa Yaro, a resident of the area told Daily Trust that some members of the Boko Haram, who disguised in military uniforms, drove a military painted Hilux truck and waylaid the JTF operatives.

The whole of Budun was cordoned off yesterday, a development which prevented journalists from getting access to the area. The Sunday attack on the soldiers came barely 24 hours after the sect members in Maiduguri beheaded three persons.

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