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Nigeria: Joint Task Force Kills 52 in Maiduguri Battle

BY HAMZA IDRIS, 10 MARCH 2013

Maiduguri — No fewer than 52 members of the dreaded Boko Haram group have been killed by the Joint Task Force (JTF) in the last 10 days, spokesman of the JTF, Lieutenant Colonel Sagir Musa, said yesterday in Maiduguri at a media briefing.

Few hours after the departure of President Goodluck Jonathan, who was on a two-day visit to the volatile Borno and Yobe States, the JTF said its men ambushed a hideout of suspected Boko Haram members in Maiduguri where they killed 20 of them and recovered sophisticated weapons, including guns that had the capacity to bring down aircraft.

Two technical vehicles with mounted Anti-Aircraft Stands were recovered at the suspected Boko Haram building in Jajeri suburb.

Two soldiers were killed. Three others sustained injuries when the JTF operatives met stiff resistance while approaching the den of the insurgents, the spokesman said.

Though the JTF could only account for 52 deaths, military sources said more than 50 suspected members of the Boko Haram were killed in last weekend's operations.

There are fears in Maiduguri that the insurgents had perfected plans to strike during the President's visit.

It could be recalled that many helicopters hovered the sky throughout the visit of the president. Residents were locked indoors for over 48 hours, a development that left the streets empty.

The spokesman of the JTF told newsmen yesterday that contrary to media reports, there were no blasts in Maiduguri throughout the president's visit, pointing out that the endless sound heard across Maiduguri were those of gunshots of browning machine from Armoured Personnel Carrier (APCs) fired by JTF during their altercation with Boko Haram insurgents.

Lt. Col. Sagir said items recovered during last Friday's operation include: 3 Anti Aircraft Guns, 10 Rocket Propelled Grenade Tubes, 3 General Purpose Machine Guns, 17 AK47 Rifles, 3 G3 Rifles, 1 Pistol (Lama), 20 RPG Bombs, 12 RPG Chargers, 1x 36 Hand Held Grenade.

Others are: 1 Teargas Rifle, 33 AK 47 Magazines, 11 FN Magazines, 3 G3 Magazines, 11,068 Assorted Ammunitions, 2 Technical Vehicles with mounted Anti Aircraft Stands, 1 Box of weapons cleaning kit, 4 Swords and 2 Knifes, 5 Walking Talkies, 4 VHF Hand Held Sets, 1 Multi Links Router and assorted uniforms and kits.



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