

Terrorists kill 8 soldiers in Borno

From Olatunji Omirin &
Uthman Abubakar, Maiduguri

No fewer than eight soldiers including a lieutenant have been killed, and many others injured, with several missing after insurgents of the Islamic West Africa Province (ISWAP) attacked a military formation in Kaga Local Government Area of Borno State on Tuesday, security sources have said.

The ISWAP stormed a remote village of Mainok at about 1pm along Maiduguri/Damaturu road in Kaga LGA and opened fire on troops digging trenches to protect their base.

The security source said two gun trucks belonging to 121 Task Force Battalion were also forcefully taken by the ISWAP but later recovered by the Police Force.

"We thought they were a friendly force because they rode on a Police Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) and headed towards us while we were digging trenches to fortify our base near Mainok town.

"They then opened fire on our soldiers, unfortunately,

eight soldiers including a lieutenant were killed instantly and many of our soldiers are still unaccounted for," the source said.

Similarly, Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) operatives of Borno Police Command on Tuesday successfully foiled an ambush and killed five Boko Haram insurgents at Mainok village after they attacked a military base earlier.

It was gathered that though the insurgents had engaged in a heavy gun battle with the SARS unit, the unit responded swiftly and overpowered the insurgents.

In a video clip obtained by Daily Trust, the SARS Commander who led the operation, explained to the GOC 7 Division of the Nigerian Army on patrol at Mainok, that his men gallantly, professionally and fearlessly repelled the attack, eliminating some of the Boko Haram members and recovered several gun trucks.

The GOC of 7 Division, while hailing the SARS troop, appealed for a strong joint-collaboration between the army and police in prosecuting the counter-

insurgency war in Borno, and other parts of the North-East.

A top police source told Daily Trust that about five insurgents were killed by the police while others escaped with injuries during the gun duel.

The source added that police recovered four trucks mounted with anti-aircraft guns from the terrorists, two of which were earlier taken away from troops in the axis.

Meanwhile, the attack on Mainok, about 56 kilometers from Maiduguri along the Maiduguri-Damaturu road by Boko Haram at noon of last Tuesday has aggravated the fear and dejection among the public in Borno and Yobe states over the prospect of ending the insurgency as promised by the military.

The Theater Commander of Operation Lafiya Dole, Maj. Gen Olusegun Adeniyi, assured the public that the Maiduguri-Damaturu main supply route was now safe for motorists and commuters, after series of attacks on the route in the last one month.

Just about 18 hours after he gave the assurance, the terrorists dared the troops to a fight on the road by

engaging them in broad daylight fight.

Last Sunday night, there was an 'attempted' attack in which the Theater Commander Operation Lafiya Dole, Maj. Gen. Olusegun Adeniyi, said he and other officials on patrol had a gun dwell with terrorists along the road, without saying the exact location.

The second was the recent Mainok attack, over 50 kilometers to Maiduguri, in Kaga Local Government Area, by 1pm of Tuesday, where the troops and, later, the police (SARS) had a fierce encounter with the terrorists leading to the killing of several troops and terrorists, as well as the recovery of some gun trucks.

These have deepened the fear and despair among the public, especially motorists and commuters, and affected the main section of the economy flowing to Borno State from other parts of the country.

"The attacks in the last one month have reduced commercial trips, but I can tell you that the Mainok clash by the troops and

Boko Haram has deepened our despair and drastically reduced the number of commercial trips from Maiduguri to Kano by road," a Monday Market, Maiduguri textile materials trader, Abubakar Hassan, told Daily Trust.

"I cannot say of number of visits by our kinsmen the attacks have halted in the last two days," Mohammed Kawu of Shehuri Ward, said, adding, "I was to travel to Damaturu yesterday to give out my niece in marriage, but I could not; in fact the wedding has been postponed."

These attacks have drastically reduced road transport from Maiduguri to other parts of the country enroute Damaturu, and have opened brisk business for airlines, with well-to-do commuters preferring high air fares with guarantee of safety than risk going by road.

"The Maiduguri-Abuja air fare that used to be about N40,000 now costs over N50,000 as the airlines are mostly fully booked," an anonymous airline worker told Daily Trust.

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