

Troops injure militia kingpin in Benue

From Hope Abah Emmanuel, Makurdi

...kill 2 gang members

Troops of Operation Whirl Strike (OPWS), at the weekend, injured suspected most wanted criminal kingpin in Benue, Terwase Akwaza, popularly known as Gana, and killed two of his loyalists after a raid at their hideout in Mtan village in Utenge Council Ward of Katsina-Ala Local Government Area.

Our correspondent reports that barely a week ago, the military operation conducted in Kastina Ala area of the state resulted in the death of the second most wanted criminal in the state, Terungwa Igbagwa, also known as Orjundu.

The suspected militia kingpins have been blamed for several criminal conducts

such as killings, kidnapping, and robbery in three local government areas of the state popularly referred to as 'Sankera axis,' as well as bordering towns of Taraba State.

Coordinator of Defence Media Operations, Defence Headquarters, Major General John Enenche, in a statement, posited that the troops achieved the feat in a special combined operation of Operation Whirl Stroke, Special Forces troops of Sector 2 deployed in Gbise and Zaki Biam in Benue State, and Sector 4 from Taraba State.

"In a special operation, a combined team of Operation WHIRL STROKE, Special Forces troops of Sector 2

deployed in Gbise and Zaki Biam in Benue State and Sector 4 from Taraba State carried out a raid operation on the hideout of the wanted notorious criminal named Gana in Mtan village in Utenge Council Ward of Katsina-Ala LGA of Benue State on 16th May, 2020.

"Two of the gang members were neutralised and others fled with various degrees of gunshot wounds. Exploitation revealed that Gana narrowly escaped death with gunshot wounds," the statement read in part.

Enenche listed items recovered at the criminal hideouts to include: one locally fabricated machine gun, six locally made rifles, two

locally fabricated cartridge guns, one Dane gun, two revolver pistols, two cartridge pistols, 27 rounds of 9mm ammunition, two motorcycles, one camouflage shirt, one generator set, one bag of gun powder and assorted charms.

The Defence Spokesman added that Gana's personal belongings, other items, and thatched houses were destroyed during the raid.

The statement, however, conveyed appreciation of the Military High Command to the troops for their gallantry, just as it requested members of the general public to continue to provide the Armed Forces with credible information to facilitate its operations in the country.