

B/Haram Terrorists Flee Into Borno Villages



Map of Borno State

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As Chadian troops intensified operations on the shores of the Lake Chad, some Boko Haram terrorists have continued to move further into villages in Borno State, heightening

fears among locals, of possible security breaches, *Daily Trust* gathered.

Local and security sources told our correspondents that the terrorists fled from the bushes around Gubuwa in Chad Republic, after they suffered heavy casualties.

Daily Trust also learnt that the Chadian military acted on directives of President Mahmat Idris Deby, to avenge the killing over 40 of that country's soldiers by the terrorists, last week.

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“President Mahmat Deby led the first onslaught within the Chad territory in an operation he code named, ‘Operation Haskanite’ and successfully tracked the assailants in their hideout.

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“He killed many of them and recovered a large cache of ammunition, while the remnant abandoned over 2,000 cows in the camp and crossed into the bushes around Nigeria and neighbouring Niger,” said one of the security sources who does not want to be named.

Corroborating the security source, a traditional ruler, who also pleaded for anonymity, confirmed that the Chadian troops had crossed into Nigeria to fight the terrorists.

“Days back, the Chadian troops carried out an aerial attack on the terrorists and killed about 10 of them. Unfortunately, some innocent fishermen were killed in that operation.

“Also, the ground troops have entered the Lake Chad shores in Kukawa, buying canoes from our fishermen to engage in the operation. They were very aggressive and dealt a heavy blow on the

terrorists.

“They are now buying the vessels at very high prices to counter Boko Haram and prevent them from regrouping in Chad and the neighbouring Nigeria and Niger republics.

“I also learnt that they killed some insurgents in Kulkimi, a village from where the terrorists fled to the Shuwa Arab area in Nigeria in the last three days.

“Based on our assessment, all these terrorists are of Buduma extraction from the Chad Republic,” the monarch said.

A veteran in Baga, who claimed to have fought a war with Chad in 1983, said he is in contact with some of the Chadian troops in their base at Gubuwa, a town bordering Nigeria.

“The Chadian government has stationed over two thousand troops there and they are also conducting successful operations on Nigerian soil.

“I also learnt that Nigerian troops are supporting the Chadian operations in the Lake Chad general area, from their bases in Malam Fatori, Wilgo, Doron Baga, Hauwasari,” he said.

It's a political matter, not operational – MNJTF

When contacted about the alleged exit of Chad from the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) operations, the Chief Military Information Officer, MNJTF HQ, N'djamena, Lt. Col. Olaniyi Osoba, replied via Whatsapp that, “It is a political matter not operational”.

Chad's threat to exit from MNJTF heightens fears

However, with Chad threatening its withdrawal from the MNJTF, locals and security sources said the development will weaken the border control and create gaps in the regional defence network.

The MNJTF is a regional coalition established to counter Boko Haram and other insurgents' threats in the Lake Chad general area, with Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon and Benin Republic being the member states.

Many analysts have described Chad to be highly effective in the counter-insurgency operation, especially during the time of late President Idris Derby.

They also expressed fear that their exit might pose a serious challenge, which will give the terrorists an opportunity to regroup and intensify attacks on the shores of Lake Chad.

Also, some villagers interviewed in Baga, Doro and Kukawa, expressed concerns over the possibility of the insurgents moving into their areas, saying they would be forced to abandon their homes and livelihoods.

Mallum Badawi, a returnee in one of the communities said: "We were displaced for over 10 years before returning with the help of the Borno State government, and most of us are now engaged in fishing and dry season farming. But the infiltration of Boko Haram will displace us again.

"We are calling on the Nigerian government to exert more pressure on the terrorists to leave the Nigerian soil, else, we will still go back to the hopeless situation of living in IDP camps", he said.