

## Boko Haram Kills Soldier, Abducts Three Others

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JTF Rescues Three Teenage Girls, Recovers Arms, Ammunition In Borno, Yobe

SUSPECTED Boko Haram gunmen on Thursday, at about 10.45pm, attacked a military post of the Joint Task Force (JTF) in Potiskum, killing a soldier and abducting three others.

The attack comes barely 24 hours after members of the Presidential Committee on Dialogue and Resolution (PCDR) arrived Damaturu, the Yobe State capital, on their nation-wide tour.

An eyewitness said the assailants arrived in three unmarked vehicles and a tricycle. They threw Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) at one of the checkpoints along Potiskum-Kano Road and fled to an unknown destination with the abducted soldiers.

The Guardian learnt that gunmen also attacked the Shehu of Bama's palace on Tuesday, while the committee members, led by the Minister of Special Duties and Inter-Governmental Affairs, Alhaji Kabiru Taminu Turaki, paid a courtesy visit to Ibrahim Kyari Umar El-Kanemi.

Confirming Thursday's incident in Damaturu, Saturday, a soldier said: "The corpse of our colleague in the Potiskum attack has been deposited at the General

Hospital. The gunmen still operate with highly dangerous explosives and fast moving, but unregistered vehicles in Potiskum."

He noted that military operatives are on the trail of the gunmen, adding that fighter jets of the Nigeria Air Force (NAF) from Maiduguri Air Force Base have been dispatched to suspected Boko Haram training camps and hideouts in Yobe State.

Narrating how the JTF post was attacked, he said: "It was a coordinated ambush. But I cannot tell you exactly how some of our colleagues were abducted and taken to unknown destinations."

He disclosed that two weeks earlier, three soldiers were killed while two sustained injuries, barely six hours after insurgents killed seven secondary school students in Damaturu, the state capital.

JTF spokesman, Lt. Eli Lazarus, however, said that only a soldier was injured, and confirmed the killing of seven students and two teachers at the school.

“During this multiple attacks, soldiers were able to kill one of the terrorists and capture another alive,” Lazarus said.

Men of the Joint Task Force (JTF) in Maiduguri, Borno State, on Friday, rescued three girls allegedly abducted by suspected Boko Haram gunmen.

The abductors had fled from their destroyed training camps and hideouts at Sambisa Games Reserve Forests (SGRF) and Kirenoa in the northern part of the state.

The rescue, according to JTF sources in Maiduguri, yesterday, followed the uncovering of a new method of kidnapping by suspected Boko Haram insurgents. This entails disguising as taxi drivers to pick teenage girls to unknown destinations in Maiduguri metropolis.

In a statement, JTF spokesman, Lt. Col. Sagir Musa, said the insurgents are currently using taxicabs, mostly Volkswagen Golf or Toyota Starlet with one or two disguised passengers.

The statement reads in part: “Three teenage girls were at different times and places kidnapped in Maiduguri metropolis in less than ten days using this method. Luckily, all the kidnapped

girls were rescued by the JTF and handed over to their parents.”

Prior to the abduction of the three girls, there were no reported cases of kidnapping of female teenagers, only dozens of affluent people, top government officials and traditional leaders. These were kidnapped and released after payment of ransoms.

Meanwhile, soldiers in Yobe State have discovered a Boko Haram hideout, recovering arms and ammunition, including police jackets and helmets.

It followed an attack by the sect in Fune Local Government Area of the state on Friday night.

Displaying the weapons, Saturday, in Damaturu, JTF spokesman, Lt. Eli Lazarus, said: “the gunmen had on Friday attacked our JTF checkpoint in Fune council area and snatched a police vehicle containing 86 helmets and jackets. Our men have also made recoveries of two vehicles, arms, ammunition and other materials used for making Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).”

Speaking on how the insurgents’ hideout was smashed, he said: “Our men pursued and

engaged them in a fierce gun battle, thereby overpowering the terrorists. We recovered a stolen vehicle as well as another one used by the armed sect.

“Other items recovered include, an AK47 rifle, three Rocket Propelled bombs, three RPG chargers, a riot gun, and 485 rounds of ammunition.”

Lazarus also said that, 42 police fragmentation jackets, 44 police helmets, six AK47 rifle magazines, 80 fragmentation blades and illicit drugs were also recovered from the hoodlums.

He said some of the suspects fled with gunshot wounds and appealed to the public to report anyone with such condition to security operatives.

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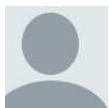
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