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## JTF, others kill 30 Boko Haram suspects in Borno

WEDNESDAY, 17 JULY 2013 00:00 FROM SAXONE AKHAINE (KADUNA) AND NJADVARA MUSA (MAIDUGURI) NEWS - NATIONAL



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A FRESH crackdown on Boko Haram has led to the death of 30 suspected members of the group in Borno State.

The Joint Task Force (JTF), Operation Restore Order and members of Borno Vigilance Youths Group (BVYG), allegedly killed the suspected terrorists at the Zagardajeri village of Jere Local Council of the state.

A source disclosed in Maiduguri yesterday that the killings followed a search for a Boko Haram member by the vigilance youths on Tuesday, before men of the JTF clashed with terror suspects, hiding in the village for over three weeks.

Spokesman of JTF, Lt-Col. Sagir Musa, also said that there was a special operation of the joint security forces at a village on the outskirts of Maiduguri metropolis, where over three dozens of terror suspects were feared dead in the three-hour operation.

He disclosed that some rifles and arms were also recovered from the village, while the purported village head pursued by the youths before the troops intervened, was said to be a member of the group that relocated and fled to the village in June.

The chairman of BVYG, Abubakar Mallum, said that the killing of the terror suspects in the village was facilitated when the youths pursued a suspected Boko Haram member and arrested him with a Kalashnikov rifle and N100,000 cash.

Mallum further disclosed: "When our members were arresting the suspect, we were told that the youths had to get the permission of the village head before such arrests could be made. On getting to the village head, at his residence, we recovered a rifle and huge sums of money, allegedly provided to carry out more attacks on Maiduguri Metropolitan Council (MMC) and Jere Council areas of Borno State.

"While the youths were making more inquiries and investigation in the village, some gunmen opened fire; and started firing at our members; and killed one of us and injured a youth in the arm. As our safety was in danger, I had to alert men of JTF in Maiduguri on a tricycle, so that the soldiers could assist us fish out and arrest terror suspects hiding in this village, north of Jere Local Council."

The soldiers, according to him, quickly intervened and rushed to the village with their patrol vehicles and killed over three dozens of terror suspects, who could have fled from the Sambisa Games Reserve Forests (SGRF) and Maiduguri metropolis.

He said the villagers, who had been living with the fleeing Boko Haram suspects, also fled the village after the troops killed the terror suspects.


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Meanwhile, the JTF yesterday has relaxed the dusk-to-dawn curfew by two hours to enable Muslims in the state perform the Ramadan fast that started July 10, 2013.

The curfew, according to JTF sources, commences from 11.00 p.m. to 6.00 a.m. daily, unlike in the past when it began from 9.00 p.m. to 6.00 a.m.

The relaxation of the curfew was contained in a statement by Musa. The statement made available yesterday to reporters in Maiduguri reads in part: "The JTF has observed tremendous improvement in the security situation in Borno State. For that reason and in the spirit of Ramadan fasting, the task force finds it expedient to review the curfew timings imposed on the state.

"We request that all citizens remain vigilant throughout the Holy month."

And two months after the shutdown of Global System of Mobile (GSM) Communications by the JTF in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states following the declaration of emergency rule by President Goodluck Jonathan on May 14, 2013, telephone services were restored in Yobe State yesterday.

The Guardian learnt that residents in the state woke up yesterday only to realise that there were epileptic MTN services, while the three other networks of Globacom, Airtel and Etisalat remained shut.

Even though Damaturu and Potiskum residents are happy with the partial restoration of MTN telephone services, they called for the full restoration of services and other networks in the state.

The restoration is coming a week after a similar development in neighbouring Adamawa State.

Meanwhile, Borno State governor, Kashim Shettima, has announced educational scholarship to 50 children, whose parents were killed by Boko Haram gunmen at various times and in different parts of Maiduguri metropolis.

Speaking on Tuesday during the break of fast at the Government House, Maiduguri, the governor disclosed that the scholarship would cut across orphans from both Muslim and Christian homes.

And tragedy struck in Kaduna yesterday when unknown gunmen attacked Kaura Police Divisional Headquarters, killing two policemen and injuring several people.

Briefing newsmen shortly after being conducted round the scene of the attack, Kaduna State Commissioner of Police, Olufemi Adenaike, attributed the attack to the porous nature of the police station. He assured that all vulnerable police stations within the state would be fenced to prevent a recurrence of such incident.

The victims whose names were given as Benedict Audu and Gabriel Joshua were a sergeant and corporal.

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