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Many die, 15 arrested as military raid Boko Haram hideout in Yobe

THURSDAY, 03 OCTOBER 2013 23:04 FROM NJADVABA MUSA (DAMATURU) AND JOSEPH WANTU (MAKURDI) NEWS - NATIONAL

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•• Sect kills three in Borno

THE Nigerian military made an early success in its redesigned strategy against terrorism just a day after it deployed fighter jets and artillery units in Yobe State, as several Boko Haram terror suspects were reportedly killed while 15 others were arrested in the Gujba-Goniri Forests on Tuesday.

According to 3 Division Special Operation Battalion spokesmen, Capt. Eli Lazarus, who spoke yesterday in Maiduguri, Borno State, the military operation was conducted in the forests, where the insurgents were taking refuge against aerial bombardments.

He disclosed that several fleeing members of the Islamist sect have been killed, including those who attacked the College of Agriculture in Gujba last Sunday, while men of the artillery unit arrested 15 terror suspects.

Lazarus revealed that the arrested suspects in the custody of the military were still being investigated and were giving useful information.

However, violence erupted again in Maiduguri, Borno State, on Wednesday evening when suspected Boko Haram gunmen ambushed and killed about three truck drivers at the Ngaddabul River bank after pulling them out of their seats and slitting their throats.

The slain drivers, according to an eyewitness, were killed when they drove to the riverbed to lift sand. He said: "We heard yelling and cry of people near the River side. When soldiers and policemen at the Dalori military checkpoint rushed to the scene, they found two drivers in their pool of blood, with their throats slit, while the other driver's head was hanging at his back."

Spokesman of Borno State Police Command, Gideon Jibrin, confirmed the incident yesterday, but said that no arrest has been made.

Meanwhile, the Nigerian Army 7 Division in Borno will today destroy large quantities of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) recovered during the recent BOYONA operations in the state, and has warned residents and members of Chabbal community, including farmers and herdsmen, to remain indoors.

Speaking yesterday at the Joint Task Force (JTF) Headquarters in Maiduguri, the spokesman, Lt. Col. Sagir Musa, said the detonation exercise at Chabbal general area on Maiduguri-Gubio Road was to prevent them from exploding and destroying lives and property.

He urged people not to panic over "the massive movements of troops and vehicles and the sounds of explosives today, while warning farmers and herdsmen at the detonating sites to keep away from the Chabbal general area until the exercise is completed.

On the recent attacks and killings on Maiduguri-Damaturu Road and in Benishiekh, he said the army is seriously concerned and working to contain the trend, not only on the affected road, but also in its other areas of responsibility.

Nevertheless, the new Air Officer Commanding (AOC), Tactical Air Command (TAC), Makurdi, Benue State, Air Vice Marshal Adesola Amosu, has stated that the war against terrorism plaguing the North-Eastern Nigeria could be totally won if everyone is security conscious.

Amosu spoke in Makurdi while taking over from the outgoing AOC, AVM Chimechefulam Onyemaobi, and urged officers and men of the command to be wary of friends who come around them.

He noted that the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) had not fought war for many years and now has to grapple with the problem of terrorism in the country, but assured of NAF's ability to overcome the challenge.

He listed the challenges confronting TAC to include that the F7 aircraft has been in use for sometime, the land dispute between the command and its host community, the capabilities of the troupes in Maiduguri, as well as the need to give adequate protection to all other bases as the engine room of NAF.

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