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By Chukwuma Muanya, Assistant Editor (Lagos), Njadvara Musa (Maiduguri) and Segun Olaniyi (Abuja) | 07 August 2017 | 4:40 am



Troops of 151 Battalion, 21 Brigade of the Nigerian Army discovered the multiple explosives, while on a routine clearing of bushes to facilitate the movements of troops."

- Defence minister visits troops in Borno
- 50 per cent of deaths due to malaria, says WHO

Troops of Operation Lafiya Dole have announced the killing of two Boko Haram insurgents and recovering of explosives and motorcycles in an ambush. The Director of Army Public Relations, Brig-Gen Sani Usman disclosed this yesterday in a statement in Maiduguri, the Borno State capital.

He said the operation took place early yesterday at the Forward Operation Base in Mainok, along a track leading to Alagarno forest in Borno. Usman explained that the explosives were recovered at Banki route junction, near Bama on the northeast flank of Sambisa Forest.

The statement reads: "The terrorists were ferrying logistic items to their colleagues in the forest. The ambush team also recovered some jerry cans and guinea corn flour.

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“Similarly, troops of 151 Battalion, 21 Brigade of the Nigerian Army discovered the multiple explosives, while on a routine clearing of bushes to facilitate the movements of troops.”

Meanwhile, the Minister of Defence, Mansur Dan-Ali, yesterday started a two-day “familiarisation and assessment” visit to troops in the front lines to boost their moral in the fight against insurgents.

The minister’s spokesman, Col. Tukur Gusau disclosed this in an interactive session with journalist in Maiduguri. Meanwhile, the World Health Organisation (WHO) yesterday disclosed that malaria caused half of the deaths in the state, which was more than deaths from a combination of other diseases, including cholera, measles and hepatitis E.

According to the report, 58.8 per cent of children are currently at a risk of the disease’s outbreaks, even as up to 10,000 lives could be saved by November through malaria prevention and control.

Director of WHO’s Global Malaria Programme, Dr. Pedro Alonso, explained: “Malaria, malnutrition, fragile states and civil strife often involve each other. Wherever we have a humanitarian crisis in a malaria endemic country, we could almost always be sure that malaria is the number one killer.”

WHO Representative in Nigeria, Dr. Wondi Alemu, said: “We will not know the full impact of our efforts until November, but we are confident that taking some necessary steps would reduce the deaths and people’s suffering.

The report said some 3.7 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance, adding that around 8500 people are infected every week with the disease. With the high transmission season for malaria lasting through October, WHO said these numbers would increase.

The organisation warned that, with more than 60 per cent of health facilities partially functioning, many people have not had access for years to regular health services, including routine vaccinations and basic medicines.

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