

MNJTF kills 10 ISWAP commanders, 100 fighters in Lake Chad

From Hassan Ibrahim, Maiduguri

Troops of the Multinational Joint task Force (MNJTF) have eliminated no fewer than 100 Boko Haram/Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP) terrorists, including 10 key commanders in Lake Chad region.

The Chief of Military Public Information for MNJTF, Col. Muhammad Dole, in a statement on Sunday, said the forces successfully hit the enclaves in a well coordinated land and air offensives.

Dole said the offensives were conducted under "Operation Lake Sanity", joint operations involving the MNJTF troops from Nigeria, Niger and Cameroon and troops from Operation Hadin Kai (OPHK- Nigeria).

He said the operation also included the combined Air Task Forces of MNJTF and OPHK other security agencies and the Civilian Joint Taskforce (CJTF).

Dole said the troops raided the insurgents' dens in Zanari, Arina Woje, which served as major fabrication workshops, and several other locations around the Islands from different corridors in the last one week.

According to him, the terrorists were neutralised following intelligence -driven lethal air strikes in the Lake Chad islands by the combined air taskforces.

"Some of the commanders include Abubakar Dan Buduma, Abubakar Shuwa, Abu Ali and Abu Jubrilla among others.

"Relatedly, sophisticated

weapons of different calibres including a 105 mm artillery piece, several canoes/boats, motorcycles, bicycles, several Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) making factories and bunkers were destroyed.

"In the course of the operation, significant number of innocent citizens, mostly women and children held captive by the criminals, were rescued.

"Large quantities of food stuff (grains), fuel dumps, illicit drugs, terrorists' uniforms and other households materials were recovered and destroyed immediately," he said.

MNJTF spokesman said that logistics and foodstuffs, including several bags of maize and beans, motorcycles, some immobilised military and civil vehicles, were discovered at Fedondiya settlement in a clearance operation.

He said equipment like grinding machines, vehicle fabrication tools and military uniforms ,were also destroyed and set ablaze in the location.

According to him, it was obviously a big Boko Haram / ISWAP camp having another large IED making and vehicle borne IED making factory that was cleverly camouflaged to prevent detection from the air.

Dole said the MNJTF troops on clearance patrols in Kimeguna near the Lake Chad in Niger Republic accosted terrorists logisticians ferrying 457 bags of fish in several carts.

He said the bags of fish were immediately destroyed in line with the MNJTF standing operating

procedure, adding that the suspects were currently being profiled.

According to him, the obviously frustrated BHT/ISWAP criminals have resorted to indiscriminate laying of IEDs and use of vehicle borne explosive devices attacks.

He said the troops had encountered four of such attacks, saying that 18 soldiers including an officer had been wounded in these attacks.

Dole added that the wounded had been evacuated to various military medical facilities for treatment, while three soldiers and one member of the CJTF paid the supreme sacrifice.

According to Dole, the Force Commander (FC) MNJTF, Maj.-Gen. Abdul-Khalifah Ibrahim, commended his deputy, sector commanders, officers and men of MNJTF and other operations, including the CJTF for their courage and commitment.

Dole said Ibrahim paid tribute to the troops who paid the supreme sacrifice and prayed for quick recovery of the wounded heroes.

Ibrahim urged the troops to be resolute and bold to finally eradicate the criminals from the Lake Chad areas and promised continuous logistics support to the troops.

The force commander advised the terrorists to lay down their arms like thousands of their colleagues who had done so instead of pursuing a futile and failed cause.

He also appealed to communities in the areas of operation and beyond to always support security forces by passing credible information on the terrorists quickly to bring an end to the scourge of terrorism in the area.