

Troops neutralise kidnappers, arrest gunrunners in Kaduna, Plateau

By Isa Abdulsalami Ahovi, Jos

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Nigerian police patrols during the End Bad Governance protest at Ikeja, Lagos, on August 1, 2024. – Nigerian troops and police tightened security in Lagos and the capital Abuja on Thursday as they prepared for planned protests over the cost of living. Africa's most populous country is struggling with soaring inflation and a sharply devalued naira currency after President Bola Ahmed Tinubu introduced reforms a year ago that aimed to revive the economy. (Photo by Benson Ibeabuchi / AFP)

Troops of 3 Division and Operation SAFE HAVEN (OPSH) on the ongoing Operation LAFIYAN JAMA'A have neutralised two kidnappers and nabbed suspected gunrunners while recovering arms and ammunition in Plateau and Kaduna states.

On March 12, 2025, troops conducted offensive operations as part of the ongoing Operation LAFIYAN JAMA'A to clear criminal elements hibernating around Kuru and Turu in Jos South local government area (LGA) of Plateau State.

This was disclosed yesterday by the Media Information Officer (MIO) of OPSH, Major Samson Nantip Zhakom, in Jos. During the operation, troops made contact with kidnappers/terrorists close to the high grounds in Kuru and neutralised two of the criminals who had 18 rounds of 7.62 mm (Special) and 9 rounds of 5.56 x 45 mm ammunition.

According to Zhakom, "Additionally, on 12 March 2025, troops of 3 Division/Operation SAFE HAVEN conducting Operation LAFIYAN JAMA'A mounted snap checkpoints along Bokkos – Bot – Mangu road in Bokkos LGA of Plateau State.

"The operation followed credible intelligence on the movement of arms and ammunition along the area. During the operation, troops intercepted a notorious gunrunner identified as Mr Sengi David aged 21 years who hails from Kopal Village in Panyam District in Mangu LGA of Plateau State in possession of one AK-47 magazine and 48 rounds of 7.62 mm (Special) ammunition. The suspect and recovered items are in custody for investigation."

In a similar development, the statement added that their troops on 11 March 2025 conducted a sting operation to arrest a notorious kidnapper, terrorist and gunrunner identified as Mr Blessed Paul aged 22 years at Garaje Community in Jema'a LGA of Kaduna State.

"The suspect who had been on the wanted list of security agencies for kidnapping and gunrunning activities had earlier escaped to the FCT Abuja to evade arrest. However, he was lured with the promise of purchasing one AK-47 rifle for the sum of One Million, Five Hundred Thousand Naira (N1,500,000.00).

“The suspected gunrunner agreed and met troops who posed as potential buyers at the selected spot in Garaje Community where he was rounded up. A search on the suspect led to the recovery of one AK-47 rifle, one AK-47 magazine and 2 rounds of 7.62 mm (Special). The suspect and recovered arms and ammunition are in custody.”

It said that the suspect is making useful confessions to assist troops in further operations to arrest other members of the criminal syndicate.

Likewise, on 12 March 2025, the troops conducted rescue operations on the outskirts of Josho Village in Daffo District in Bokkos LGA of Plateau State. The operation followed credible intelligence that kidnappers were keeping some abducted victims in the area. During the operation, the kidnappers abandoned their victims and fled upon sighting troops.

Consequently, troops searched the hideout and rescued two female victims identified as Miss Nanbam Adamu aged 11 years, and Miss Dorcas Wantu both indigenes of Mbor Village in Mushere District in Bokkos LGA of Plateau State.

The rescued victims have been debriefed and handed over to their families. Meanwhile, troops are currently conducting follow-up operations to intercept and neutralise the fleeing kidnappers.

Zhakom pointed out that the troops of 3 Division and Operation Safe Haven will remain resolute in the discharge of their duties, while they advise the general public to continually provide useful and credible information to aid the operations of the troops.