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Troops foil attacks on Borno communities

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• Kill 20 insurgents

By Stella Odueme-Omona (Abuja), Yaqoub Popoola (Ado-Ekiti), Ekene Okoro (Lagos) and Oladele Ogunsola (Ibadan)



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Attempts
by
suspected
terrorists
to attack
Ajiri and
Mafa as
well as
other

communities in the outskirt of Maiduguri and Dikwa in Borno State towards the Cameroon borders have been foiled by the security forces.

Twenty of the insurgents were killed in the encounter.

Also, troops on reinforcement mission cleared the ambush mounted by the terrorists to enable them unleash terror on the communities unchallenged.

“Arms captured from the terrorists include various brands of machine guns and improvised explosive devices. Twenty insurgents died in the encounter, while own troops sustained varying degree of injuries,” Director, Defence Information, Chris Olukolade, a Major General, said in a statement in Abuja on Thursday.

He added: “Also, more camps were destroyed on Wednesday in encounters at various forests and mountain locations around Adamawa and Borno States.”

He also frowned at statements by some prominent Nigerians that the insurgents were better harmed.

“The Defence Headquarters has noted with grave concern the inflammatory pronouncements by some highly placed persons in government and some apparently sponsored commentators in and outside the country who have consistently given false and misleading remarks to describe the disposition of troops in the ongoing operations.

“It has become clear that this sustained campaign is intended to demoralise the troops and give impression that the military is overwhelmed by the terrorist group. This tendency is unfortunate to say the least.

“For the avoidance of any doubt, it is hereby restated that the Nigerian military cannot by any standard be overwhelmed by the insurgents, neither will the devious antics of their sympathisers and sponsors demoralise the fighting spirit of troops.

“Nigerians and indeed all well-wishers are enjoined to discountenance the propaganda messages of the terrorists and their backers alleging the inability of Nigerians troops to handle the insurgency,” Olukolade stressed.

Meanwhile, women of Ekiti State have joined the rest of the country to call for prayers, improved security network and eternal vigilance to end the incessant killings by the Boko Haram sect members.

With dirges during a solemn procession to mourn the incident in Ado-Ekiti on Thursday, they expressed outrage particularly at the massacre of over 40 students

of the Federal Government College, Buni Yadi, Yobe State.

The professional women bodies, top female political leaders and other women stakeholders were led by wife the state Governor, Bisi Fayemi; the Deputy Governor, Modupe Adelabu; and Commissioner for Women Affairs, Social Development and Gender Empowerment, Fola Richie-Adewusi.

Clad in black on black and hoisting placards bearing different messages, the women condemned the seeming intractable killings in the North that had claimed thousands of lives.

In Lagos, scores of women also took to the streets on Thursday to protest gruesome killings of the school children in Yobe State and the abduction of 25 girls in Borno State by the suspected Boko Haram insurgents.

The women were clad in black attires as they sang mournful and dirge in memory of the slain students.

The women who were armed with placards converged at the Lagos Television Ground, Ikeja, Lagos, to stage a peaceful walk through Awolowo Way to the State House, Ikeja, to register their grievances at the killing of innocent school children by Boko Haram.

The peaceful protest was initiated by Nigerian Women Mourn, with the support of Women Arise Initiative and other women NGOs.

They carried placards, some of which read: 'Nigerian women mourn, stop the killing of our children'; 'Never again shall the blood of our children be spilled'; 'Stop the killing and abduction, Nigerian women and mothers say'; 'Our children cry for justice'; 'United we stand against murdering of our children'; 'Enough of senseless killings'; and 'No to murder', among others.

Convener, Nigerian Women Mourn, Laila St. Matthew Daniel, said the Nigerian women were concerned about the escalating rate of violence in North East.

"We are particularly moved by the senseless killing of innocent children in the Federal Government College, Yobe and the abduction of 25 girls from their schools in Borno.

“We commiserate with the families of the slain children, women and men of Adamawa and Borno States and join in solidarity to say ‘no more! Enough is enough of the killings’.

“We are saddened that this situation has been left to fester for so long with no noticeable resolution on the part of government and related bodies.

“We are calling on the government to quickly identify lasting solutions to end the mayhem and bloodshed; to ensure that members of the affected communities, particularly women are included at the decision-making table,” she stated.

President, Women Arise Initiative, Joe Okei-Odumakin, said the protest march was timely to bring about a change and transformation, adding that the Nigerian women were deeply concern about the killing of innocent children.

In Ibadan, President of Breast Cancer Association of Nigeria, Betty Anyanwu-Akeredolu, also led over 200 Oyo State women on a peaceful walk to mourn children and students who were killed by the Boko Haram insurgents.

She said the essence of the protest was to express the sadness of Nigerian mothers to the killings of their children and the future of Nigeria.

According to Anyanwu-Akeredolu, “Dozens of our children were murdered in their sleep in a most barbaric manner. We have also become accustomed to sad tales of how some mindless characters have turned the northern part of our country to a huge theatre of war.

“We note with deep sadness that in spite of the declaration of a state of emergency in Yobe, Adamawa and Borno, the security agencies seem to have no answer to the attack of these people,” she added.

Oyo Stae State Deputy Governor, Moses Alake, who met the protesters at the Oyo State Governor’s Office entrance where the walk terminated, praised the courage of the protesters and sympathised with those who have been affected in the carnage.

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