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Nigerian troops



## Dozens Of Insurgents Killed As Troops Repel Fresh Maiduguri Attack

Our Correspondents

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At least 500 persons, mostly Boko Haram militants, were yesterday confirmed dead at the outskirts of Maiduguri, the Borno State capital, when the insurgents attempted to attack Maiduguri one week after they were repelled by Nigerian troops, security sources and witnesses have said.

LEADERSHIP learnt that more than 1,000 Boko Haram gunmen, among them many Chadian mercenaries, staged what many military officers described as the most daring attempt to overrun the largest capital city in northeast Nigeria.

The insurgents, who arrived at the gates of Maiduguri at about 5am in the morning, planned to attack the state capital from the four flanks of the city in what would have ended as the bloodiest attack ever carried out by the Boko Haram.

Last week, fleeing displaced persons from Monguno narrated how the insurgents, who had attacked their communities and forced many of them to relocate to the capital city, had told them that they had a plan to turn

Maiduguri into a bloody grave yard once they take the city.

Security sources said the insurgents, who were armed with all kinds of munitions, including field artillery weapons and rocket propelled launchers and grenades, made it to the gates of Maiduguri but met stiff resistance from Nigerian soldiers and Civilian JTF operatives.

A top security officer told LEADERSHIP off the records that "they attempted to enter Maiduguri via Ngom, Dalwa, Mulai Njmitilo, but were met with a superior counter-offensive by our troops."

"The terrorists sustained their determination to take Maiduguri by all means as soldiers continued to shell, bombard and gun them down for well over five hours.

"The insurgents came attacking with unusually long range artillery guns which they fired indiscriminately into the city which resulted in killing many innocent civilians."

In a suburb of Maiduguri known as Abujantalakawa, situated on the way to Damboa, the rocket propelled grenade (RPG) fired by the insurgents killed an aged man and his granddaughter as they sat outside their home.

The grenade which landed near a public Islamic school also seriously injured one of the pupils who had run to the old man for protection upon hearing the noise of battle.

Meanwhile, a senior security officer in Maiduguri told journalists that over 500 members of the Boko Haram died in the battle.

"The hoodlums were so daring in their attempt to take over Maiduguri but our men seriously put up stiff resistance and left the hoodlums with a bitter experience today. Over 500 of them were wasted out there. We have recovered several weapons and arms which they abandoned while fleeing," he said.

Another source reported that a Nigerian air force jet dropped some bombs at the advancing Boko Haram fighters near a hospital about three kilometres away from Giwa barracks, killing many of them and injuring some civilians as well.

In an area called Zannari, an air force jet was said to have dropped bombs on a house where sachet water was being produced, killing seven persons there.

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### Life returns to the streets

Residents of Maiduguri have begun to come out of their homes to the streets as the town kicks back to life.

As the shootings subsided at about 1pm, residents of Maiduguri returned to their normal daily activities, while soldiers and members of the Civilian-JTF maintained strict checks all day.

### Gov Shettima praises troops, civilian-JTF for gallantry

The Borno State governor, Kashim Shettima, has commended the gallantry and bravery of soldiers and operatives of the Civilian-JTF for staking their lives to defend Maiduguri when Boko Haram terrorists attacked it.

Shettima expressed pride in the youths whom he described as national heroes.

The governor made this remark in a statement signed by his media aide, Malam Isa Umar, a copy of which was made available to LEADERSHIP in Maiduguri yesterday.

"I received with gratitude information on how youths from different parts of Borno State, comprising those under the Borno Youth Empowerment Scheme, otherwise called Civilian-JTF, vigilantes and other residents of Maiduguri, came out of their homes, abandoned their families and, with very uncommon courage, sacrificed their lives and moved to frontlines to support our gallant armed forces in a patriotic battle to defend the soul of Borno State and its people from being seized by determined insurgents who in the early hours of Sunday, February 1, 2015, lay siege on two entry points into Maiduguri – Dalwa community from Damboa axis and from the Mafa-Dikwa axis – with a murderous intention of killing a massive population of residents and internally displaced persons taking refuge in the State capital and destroying homes and business in what would have become an unimaginable calamity.

"I have never been as proud of our youths in Borno State as much as I am today. The youths have since 2013 risen in firm defence of the good people of Borno State. We are full of gratitude to them for their sacrifices that cannot be sufficiently rewarded, no matter what government does for them by way of compensation or encouragement.

### Maiduguri Attacks: PDP hails military

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has heaped praises on officers and men of the Nigerian Armed Forces for their gallantry in repelling insurgents in Borno and other troubled states in the north.

PDP national publicity secretary, Olisa Metuh, in a statement yesterday commended the armed forces for showing exceptional patriotism and risking their lives to protect other citizens, as well as intensifying efforts to ensure that the nation is rid of terrorist activities.

The party said it recognizes the sacrifices being made by the military, adding that "what is needed at this point is for all Nigerians to close ranks and support them with words of encouragement, prayers and helpful information where necessary.

### Suicide bomber kill 7, injures 21 in Potiskum

A male suicide bomber yesterday in Potiskum, Yobe State, blew himself up in the home of a politician seeking to be a member of the National Assembly, killing himself and seven others.

According to eyewitnesses and security officials, the bomb went off at exactly 1:25pm when the politician, Mr Sabo Garbu, was busy attending to supporters that flooded his home in Potiskum.

The state police commissioner, Mr Danladi Markus, who confirmed the incident, said injured persons had been taken to the hospital.

"The bomb went off in Potiskum town at about 1pm in front of a politician's house and eight persons were killed, including the suicide bomber who carried out the act," Markus told journalists on phone while in Abuja for an official engagement.

### Bomb explosions rock Gombe, kill 5

Two bomb explosions yesterday afternoon rocked Gombe metropolis, killing five people, including the masterminds of the blasts.

The development came ahead of President Goodluck Jonathan's campaign visit to the state today

The first explosion was said to have occurred at the gate of the old Gombe Market in the heart of the town at about 2:50pm while the second bomb went off about five minutes later at the timber market which is directly behind the 301 Artillery Regiment Quarter Guard of the Nigerian Army.

### We inflicted heavy casualties on Boko Haram in Maiduguri

- DHQ

Nigerian troops yesterday repelled Boko Haram militants who had approached Maiduguri through Bama, Ngom, Alou, Delwa and Mafa in the night in their ill-fated bid to capture the capital city of Borno State, but the troops effectively contained them, killing hundreds of them, with mop-up operations ongoing.

The director of defence information (DDI), Defence Headquarters, Major General Chris Olukolade, disclosed this in a statement made available to journalists yesterday.

According to Olukolade, several members of the sect died and many weapons, arms and ammunition, including two armoured vehicles and two artillery guns as well as 17 Hilux vehicles, were captured from the insurgents.

He said, "The affected locations have been secured and soldiers wounded are being treated. Patrols and pursuit of fleeing terrorists are continuing in coordination with allied forces."

#### **Soldiers celebrate in Maiduguri as Chadian forces take over Gamboru-Ngala**

Chadian soldiers yesterday reclaimed the Nigerian border town of Gamboru-Ngala in northeast Nigeria after a heated battle that involved air raids, security sources said.

Gamboru-Ngala, which about 145 kilometres to Maiduguri, was captured by Boko Haram terrorists in November last year.

A ranked soldier, who spoke to journalists in Maiduguri about the Chadian forces' operation but insist on remaining anonymous in this report, said the Chadians are working under the AU agreement for member states to offer regional collaboration and assist Nigeria in the war against the Boko Haram insurgency.

#### **6 Suspected male suicide bombers in women's attires arrested in Yola**

Anxiety has enveloped Yola, Adamawa State capital, few hours to the presidential campaign rally of the All Progressives Congress (APC) with the report that six suspected suicide bombers have been arrested.

According to the report, the suicide male bombers who disguised themselves in female attire, were arrested yesterday at the busy Mubi roundabout at about 5pm following an alarm raised by a suspicious commercial tricycle operator who they hired to convey them to various parts of the state capital.

The tricycle operator reportedly reported his suspicions to soldiers manning the busy roundabout on reaching them and the latter immediately interrogated the suspects and whisked them away.

A man at the scene of the incident, who simply identified himself as Baba Yola, said the suspected bombers confessed that they were on a suicide mission to the state, and that 30 of them were already in the state.

Yola added that some of the suspects had made attempts to escape but were surrounded by the surging crowd that had gathered and handed back to the soldiers, adding that on further scrutiny, the suspects were established to have the trademark tattoos of Boko Haram members.

Adamawa State Police command's spokesman, DSP Othman Abubakar, said he was yet to receive the report of the arrest by the time of filing this report.

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