

Nine terrorists, 2 soldiers killed in gun battle

AN alleged plot by suspected members of the Islamic sect, Boko Haram, to unleash terror on Okene, Kogi State, came crashing down at the week-

From Mohammed Bashir, Lokoja

end after the army and operatives of the State Security Service (SSS) uncovered the plan and engaged them in a

shoot-out.

Nine of the suspected insurgents were killed while the army lost two of its men including an officer in the exchange of fire. Two other

SSS operatives were wounded.

The suspected terror group is believed to be behind the insecurity in Ebiraland over the last few months.

The suspects, according to sources, were traced to a building in Idoma area of Okene, following a tip-off.

It was gathered that once the suspects sighted the security operatives they opened fire and the soldiers responded. Some of the terrorists managed to escape only to take refuge in the surrounding mountains from where they continued firing at the soldiers.

The Commander, Army Records, Lokoja, General Alphonsus Chukwu, who led the operation, said his men were on top of the situation.

He advised law abiding citizens to go about their businesses.

Asked if the suspects were members of Boko Haram he retorted: "We have gone beyond calling

these people Boko Haram. These are terrorists".

He said his men would not leave the trouble spot until the remaining terrorists were apprehended.

A Nigerian Air Force helicopter- Apache- later joined in the operation, strafing the mountain with a view to smoking out whatever remained of the insurgents.

The fleeing men abandoned some canisters used in making bombs, two pistols and two toy pistols, among others.

Governor Idris Wada said in Lokoja that government would foot the medical bills of the wounded security agents.

The governor who visited the Federal Medical Centre where the two injured were admitted, said government would continue to work with the security agencies to rid the state of criminals.

He called on security agents not to be deterred in the task of making the state safe for the residents.



• Some of the terrorists killed in the gun battle