

ISWAP commander, 34 others killed in battles with troops

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Okodili Ndidi, Abuja

A TOP Commander of the Islamic State of West African Province (ISWAP), Abu Muqhtar and 34 other insurgents have been killed by troops in two separate attacks in Yobe and Borno states.

Muqhtar and 30 of his ISWAP members were shot dead by troops of Operation Lafiya Dole on the outskirts of Damaturu, Yobe State on Sunday while the other four, all Boko Haram members, met their end in the hands troops of the 121 Task Force Battalion in Pulka, Gwoza LGA of Borno State on Monday.

Two soldiers were however wounded while repelling the insurgents who are members of ISWAP, the group believed to be responsible for the attacks along the fringes of Lake Chad.

The Army Operation Media Coordinator, Colonel Aminu Iliyasu, in a statement yesterday, said the terrorists suffered major defeat.

His words: “The troops of Sector 2 Operation Lafiya Dole in conjunction with the Air Task Force Operation Lafiya Dole delivered a humiliating defeat to a group of Islamic State’s West Africa Province terrorists on December 22, 2019 during a massive failed attempt by the insurgents to infiltrate Damaturu.”

“During the encounter, the resilient troops promptly mobilized and blocked the insurgents advance along Gashua Road on the outskirts of Damaturu.

“The troops thereafter engaged the criminals in a fierce fire fight with the support of Air Task Force Operation Lafiya Dole which unleashed devastating fire power from the air to help take out some of the criminals’ gun trucks.

“The superior fire power forced the insurgents to withdraw in disarray albeit with very heavy casualty in both men and equipment.

“It is confirmed that a top ISWAP Commander, Abu Muqhtar, believed to have coordinated several attacks along the fringes of Lake Chad was neutralised along with over 30 other insurgents in that attack.

“Regrettably, two gallant soldiers were wounded in action during the encounter. The wounded personnel are currently receiving treatment and responding positively at a military medical facility. In the aftermath of the encounter, troops captured 1 Gun Truck and destroyed 2 others”.

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Iliyasu added further that, “Troops equally captured 561 Rounds of 12.7mm ammunition, 1420 Rounds of 7.62mm Special ammunition, 1850 Rounds of 7.62mmX51 ammunition and 2 Rocket Propelled Gun bombs. Other items captured by the gallant troops include, one Hand Held Communication Radio, 27 sachets of Meal Ready to Eat wraps and 350 liters of Premium Motor Spirit (Petrol)”.

He also said that troops of 121 Task Force Battalion in the morning of Monday killed four Boko Haram terrorists in Pulka, Gwoza LGA.

“Two front attacks by the criminals were effectively contained by the gallant troops. In the aftermath of the encounter, four Boko Haram criminals, including one suicide bomber were neutralized while others are believed to have escaped with varying degrees of gunshot wounds,” the Army Operation Media Coordinator said.

He added that troops also repelled “ some criminal Boko Haram insurgents heading towards Biu from Mandara Girau axis of Biu LGA of Borno State late in the afternoon of December 23,2019.

“Troops of 231 Battalion moved and engaged the advancing criminals while troops of 331 Artillery Regiment brought to bear deafening artillery bombardment on the visibly confused criminal insurgents forcing them to withdraw in disarray amid heavy casualty,” Iliyasu said.