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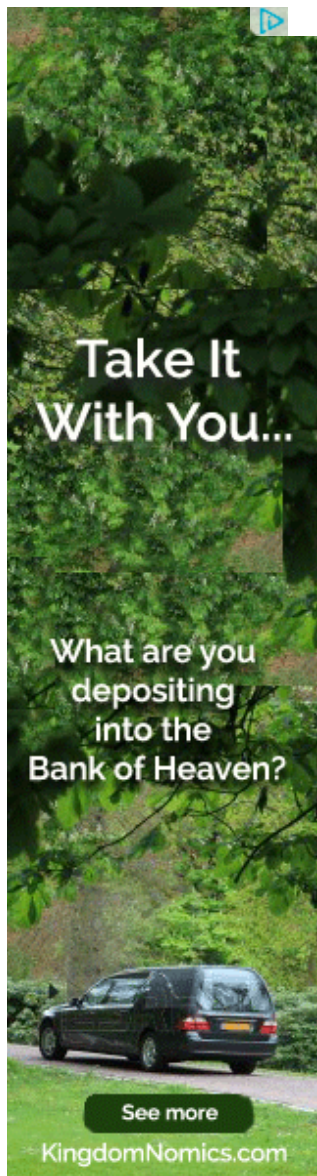
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## GOCS LEAD BATTLE AGAINST FULANI INSURGENTS • 30 KILLED IN NASARAWA

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GENERAL Officers Commanding (GOCs) in Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa, Kaduna and Niger states have started direct supervision of operations in their areas of responsibility states, as troops comb forests in their mission to apprehend members of armed gangs and destroy their enclaves.

According to a press release signed by the Director, Defence Information, Major General Chris Olukolade, the formation commanders of the Nigerian Army had moved to the various states in their area of responsibilities to conduct the

operations aimed at addressing deteriorating security situation in parts of the North-Central.

The troops deployed in Benue State had already cleared camps of all armed gangs in three local governments of the state, while normalcy had been restored in Guma, Gwer West and Agatu local government areas.

Meanwhile, some arrests and recoveries have been made in the process.

Tagged "Operation Restore Peace", the mission had also resulted in the destruction of militant camps, as well as recovery of arms in Shendam area of Plateau State.

Two AK-47 rifles were recovered after an encounter with troops of Special Task Force by the armed gangs in their enclaves in Shimankar in Plateau State.

In Kaduna State, militants' camps in Ladduga, near Kachia, were destroyed while arms were equally recovered in Maigungume Hills in Niger State.

### 30 killed in Nasarawa

The military in Nasarawa State were said to have killed over 30 suspected Fulani insurgents on Nasarawa/Benue border at Mararaban Giza community in Keana Local Government Area of the state.

This was coming barely 24 hours after a peace pact was signed by the Fulani and Tiv ethnic nationalities in the state to end incessant communal crises after their meeting with the Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIGP), (Operations), Abuja, Mr Micheal Zuokomor, who was saddled with the responsibility of proffering lasting solution to the lingering crises in nine states in Nigeria.

Nigerian Tribune findings showed that some of the suspected Fulani insurgents who were killed during the operations were brought to Dalhatu Araf Specialist Hospital (DASH) in Lafia, the state capital in a police Hilux vehicle and deposited at the mortuary, while over 20 were said to have also been deposited at the General Hospital in Keana.

According to one of the eyewitnesses who did not want his name in print, many of the alleged Fulani insurgents were still unaccounted for, as their bodies were yet to be recovered from the bush.

The military launched an offensive on the suspected Fulani insurgents while acting on a tip-off about their hideouts in Mararaba Giza and Tse-Azer where they were said to have taken shelter for some times now.

Credible sources at the Keana General Hospital confided in the Nigerian Tribune that the mortuary could no longer contain the number of dead bodies, hence the conveyance of other bodies to Lafia.

Nigerian Tribune reliably gathered that sophisticated weapons were recovered by the military from the insurgents who were taken unaware by the operation.

Confirming the casualty figure, the secretary of the state chapter of Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association, Mallam Mohammed Hussein, said over 30 of his kinsmen were killed in the operation which started around 9.00 a.m.

The head of the Fulani community, Ardo Sodangi Audu also told the Nigerian Tribune that he could not give detailed account of what transpired as of press time, but hinted that the casualty figure was expected to rise in the coming days.

When contacted on phone, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Umar Numan Isma'ila, confirmed the incident but declined any further comment, saying he had not been briefed on the incident.

"It is a military operation and they are in a better position to issue any statement, but we are trying to appeal for peace so that the situation is brought under control," he pleaded.

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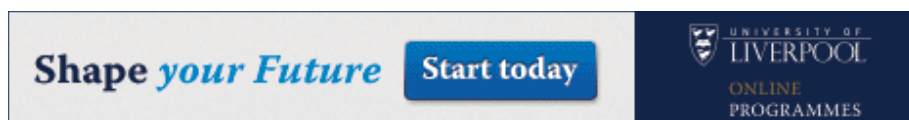
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