

Boko Haram plans to bomb during Ramadan, says military

• Kills 32 soldiers, as troops kill 19 terrorists

DEFENCE Headquarters, on Saturday said that information available to it indicated plans by terrorists to use the Ramadan periods which usually attracts gathering of large number of persons during morning and evening worships and prayers to carry out large scale bombings.

Against this background, it advised the general public to be watchful of strange persons and objects in their localities particularly, around places of worships and to promptly report same to security agencies.

It further advised that adequate security and surveillance be evolved by respective places of worship to forestall any unwholesome acts by some unscrupulous elements.

The defence headquarters, in a statement, reas-

sured law-abiding citizens to go about their normal businesses while efforts were being made to eliminate the remnants of the terrorists from their hide-outs as well as address other security challenges in the country.

Group kills 32 soldiers

Thirty soldiers from Niger and two Nigerian troops were killed in a Boko Haram attack on Niger's border with Nigeria, Niger's defence ministry said.

"On Friday, hundreds of assailants of Boko Haram attacked the position of the army of Bosso," the ministry said in a statement on Saturday.

"The counter-offensive conducted early this morning helped to retake control of all the positions in the city of Bosso. The

situation is under control," it added.

Since February 2015, Niger has been plagued by Boko Haram attacks in its southeast region.

The armed group frequently stages cross-border raids from their stronghold in neighbouring Nigeria.

The war between Boko Haram and the Nigerian government has left at least 20,000 people dead in six years and made more than 2.6 million homeless.

The Lake Chad region - which borders Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon and Niger - has been frequently targeted by Boko Haram and all four countries have formed a coalition along with Benin to fight the group.

In another development, the Nigerian Army said

that its troops in Borno on Friday killed a top Boko Haram commander known as Ameer Abubakar Gana and 18 other fighters.

A statement issued on Saturday by Army spokesman, Colonel Sani Usman said several arms, ammunitions, vehicles and other items were recovered during the operation.

Usman said in the statement that the commander and his men were killed during a clearance operation on the terrorists' stronghold at Chukungudu by troops from various army battalions with support from Air Force aerial surveillance.

Usman said the operation was conducted following intelligence report about the activities of the insurgents in the area.

"Following credible in-

formation on the presence of Boko Haram terrorists at Chukungudu, a carefully planned operation comprising troops of 22 Brigade Garrison and 153 Task Force Battalion as well as Nigerian Air Force Intelligence Surveillance Reconnaissance, was conducted.

"While advancing to the location, the troops encountered Boko Haram terrorists' ambush position at Muskari, Gilam and Hausasi.

"During the encounter at the camp, the troops killed 19 Boko Haram terrorists including their notorious leader, Ameer Abubakar Gana.

They also destroyed the terrorists' Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) making factory and detonated four primed IEDs at the factory", the statement

quoted Usman as saying.

It said the troops recovered two anti-aircraft guns, one AK-47 rifle and a magazine, a pistol, one rocket propelled grenade, 267 rounds of 7.62mm NATO metal link ammunition and 23 rounds of 12.7mm belt ammunition.

It added that the troops also recovered a Canter truck, one gun truck, one Land Rover vehicle and a Toyota (Hilux) pick up.

It said two soldiers who sustained gunshot injuries during the operation were in stable condition and responding to treatment.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), recalls that ground forces with aerial support from the Nigerian Air Force recently killed scores of insurgents, cleared their camps and rescued many hostages.