

Benue: Farmers return to farms as troops neutralise bandit, destroy camps

Johnson Babajide July 27, 2025



Following sustained clearance operations by troops of Operation Whirl Stroke (OPWS) in Benue State, locals have begun returning to their farms, according to the Acting Media Information Officer of OPWS, Lieutenant Ahmad Zubairu.

Lieutenant Zubairu disclosed this in a statement issued on Friday and made available to journalists in Makurdi.

According to him, "The troops continue to maintain an aggressive posture across the theatre, conducting robust patrols and clearance operations aimed at dismantling bandit strongholds and restoring peace.

"Notably, locals were seen returning to their farms – a sign of renewed confidence in the military's presence and improved security in the area."

The OPWS information officer further stated that, on Thursday, troops carried out another clearance operation in identified flashpoints across the state, successfully neutralising an armed bandit and destroying three bandit camps.

The statement listed the areas covered during the operation as Akure, Ako-Ivaan, Iorkyol, Ugbaba, Agber, Tse Nyikwgh, and Tse Ilim – all in Benue State.

“Troops of the Joint Task Force, Operation Whirl Stroke, recorded another operational success following a well-coordinated clearance operation across several volatile communities in Benue State. The operation, conducted on 24 July 2025, was executed by troops of Sector 1 OPWS.

“The clearance operation covered key flashpoints including Akure, Ako-Ivaan, Iorkyol, Ugbaba, Agber, Tse Nyikwgh, and Tse Ilim. During the mission, troops encountered resistance but swiftly neutralised an armed bandit through superior firepower.

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“Additionally, three bandit camps were discovered, burnt, and completely destroyed – denying criminal elements their staging grounds and operational bases,” the statement read in part.

Lieutenant Zubairu listed items recovered from the neutralised bandit to include: one AK-47 rifle, a magazine loaded with 26 rounds of 7.62mm special ammunition, a Tecno mobile phone, hard drugs, and the sum of ₦2,000.

He added that the Force Commander, Joint Task Force Operation Whirl Stroke, Major General Moses Gara, commended the troops for their “gallantry, discipline, and tactical precision,” and urged them to sustain the momentum and remain vigilant until the full mandate of the operation is achieved and lasting peace is restored to Benue State.