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Military loses 11 soldiers, kills 8 in clash with bandits

— 7th August 2016

...57 suspects arrested

NO less than 8 suspected armed bandits who have been terrorizing Kopa, Dagma and Gagaw villages of Bosso Local Government Area, Niger State, have been killed, while 57 others were arrested by the Nigerian army. The incident, according to a release by the army authority, followed covert surveillance and intelligence reports on the activities of the gun runners by troops of 31 Artillery Brigade, 1 Division, Nigerian Army, in conjunction with Nigeria Air Force detachment on Internal Security Operations, MESA.

In the encounter, the statement said, 8 soldiers of the Nigerian Army and two Airmen of the Nigeria Air Force lost their lives in the line of national duty, adding that 'one soldier is still missing, while two of their colleagues were seriously injured'.

The release further stated: "The suspected gun runners and armed bandits also burnt down 4 operational vehicles and vandalized two others. The bandits also carted away 4 AK-47 rifles and one Fabrique Nationale (FN) rifle belonging to the deceased soldiers. The troops also killed 8 of the armed bandits and arrested 57 others. They also recovered large quantity of arms and ammunition."

"The recovered items includes; three AK-47 rifles, 10 local AK-47 Rifles, nine locally made Pistols, 6 Revolver guns, which fires 7.62mm (Special ammunition), 45 loaded dane guns, 10 clubs and cudgels, 41 arrows, 18 bow cases, 122 cutlasses and machetes as well as 20 daggers."

Giving the list of weapons recovered, it added: "Other items recovered include 31 Axes, 63 rounds of 7.62 (Special) Ammunition, 10 Bajaj Motorcycles, Assorted Charms and Amulets, two vehicles, 38 mobile telephone handsets, a wristwatch, 5 Identity Cards, Passport Photographs, Cash sum of N23,870.00k, 5 Japanese Yen and 35 different denominations of old Nigerian currency, 15 Catapults, 8 torchlights, 2 gun powder bottles, four empty cases of Ammunition and 41 Cartridges. The troops also seized a military Waist Belt and a pair of military Combat Boots."

While attributing the nefarious activities of the gun runners and the armed bandits to the influx of weapons and general insecurity in some parts of the Federal Capital Territory and the North West geo-political zone of the country, the army noted that the same gun runners had links with armed robbery gangs that were involved in series of attacks along Minna-Bida road, assuring that all those involved would be brought to justice.

"The military will continue to deal with any violent threat to our national security. All law abiding citizens are enjoined to go about their lawful duties as the cordon and search operation continues in the general area, and if necessary expand to other identified areas to keep our people safe," the release assured.

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