

Boko Haram kills another Lt. Col.

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From Molly Kilete, Abuja

Less than two weeks after Lt. Col. Mohammed Abu-Ali died at the battlefield in the North East, Boko Haram has killed one of his colleagues, Lieutenant-Colonel B.U. Umar.

Eight soldiers were also wounded in an ambush in Adamawa State at about 9:30am on Monday, November 14.

Umar, commanding officer of 114 Battalion was said to have been killed along the Bitu/Pridang road, while on patrol to Mubi.

Also killed was one Lieutenant Muktar, who was injured in the operation but later died at the hospital where he was taken to for medical attention. The wounded soldiers have since been evacuated and taken to a medical facility at Michika, where they are receiving medical attention.

Umar's death is coming barely 10 days after the terrorists killed Abu-Ali, who was commanding officer of 272 task force battalion, at Mallam Fatori in northern Borno State.

Meanwhile, there is rumble among soldiers engaged in the counter-insurgency war in the North East, following alleged release of some top Boko Haram commanders in exchange for the 21 Chibok girls released recently.

Top military sources told Daily Sun, in Abuja, that most of the terrorists allegedly released were experts in the manufacturing of IED's. The source, who declined to be named alleged that since release of the terrorists, "there has been increase in the cases of IEDs, which the terrorists now plant on virtually all the routes soldiers ply to go for their operations. When contacted on the matter, Acting Director of Defence information, Brigadier- General Abubakar Rabe insisted there was no prisoner swap for the 21 Chibok schoolgirls released recently.

"People are just speculating on something that they don't know and honestly speaking, this is becoming worrisome especially now that the process of rescuing the Chibok girls and any other person is on course. Very soon, the Chief of Army Staff will launch a new operation and all these are on efforts to boost counter insurgency operation and it is not all information that will go to the public so as not to hinder the operation and jeopardise the lives of people. There is no iota of truth in that," he said. On alleged increased IEDs planted on routes usually plied by soldiers in the North East, Rabe said that does not mean government released top Boko Haram commanders in exchange for Chibok schoolgirls.

"They have been planting IEDs and we have been clearing them. There are so many efforts that we have put in that we do not even announce. If not for the clearance that we have been doing, we would not have been where we are now, especially in Sambisa. We have injected a lot of equipment that will equally take care of these IEDs and others and that is why we are making the gains that we are making and the terrorists will never bounce back". Rabe, assured.

Daily Sun, authoritatively gathered that the incident happened at about 9:30, yesterday morning.