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JTF Kills 22 Boko Haram Suspects in Borno, Yobe

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Yobe State Police Commissioner, Mr. Patrick Egbuniwe

By Michael Olugbode

The military Sunday killed 22 suspected members of Boko Haram in two different clashes in Maiduguri, the Borno State capital, and Damaturu, the Yobe State capital.

Twenty members of the terrorist group were killed in Maiduguri, in what was regarded as a major offensive against the Boko Haram sect after the 2009 siege where scores of its members were killed.

The Joint Task Force (JTF) in Borno State said in a statement that the 20 were killed during a shootout late Saturday night in Maiduguri.

In Damaturu, however, two of the insurgents were killed when a group of the sect engaged the JTF in a shootout.

A source said the JTF had launched an offensive against the sect after receiving an intelligence report that Boko Haram members were meeting at one of their hideouts in Maiduguri to finalise plans to attack the town.

The source said the pre-emptive strike by the JTF had saved the town from violence as the meeting was targeted at attacking Maiduguri and its environs.

Confirming the strike on the phone to journalists, the Field Operations Officer of JTF in Borno State, Colonel Victor Ebhaleme, said during the attack where 20 sect members were killed, one soldier was killed and two others sustained gunshot injuries.

He said: "We got intelligence reports that some suspected Boko Haram terrorists were having a meeting at a particular location in the metropolis. When we approached the venue of their meeting, the terrorists opened fire on the JTF which led to the killing of 20 of the terrorists, while we lost one soldier and two others sustained injuries."

Ebhaleme attributed the latest success against the sect to the new tactic, "Humanitarian Line of Operation", which has seen the JTF embracing members of the civil society.

In Damaturu, police sources said that the siege on some of Boko Haram's hideouts lasted between 6 am and 11 am in Bagandari, Powari and Pompomari areas of Damaturu.

Confirming the incident, Yobe State Police Commissioner, Mr. Patrick Egbuniwe, said two suspected terrorists were shot dead Sunday during the exchange of gunfire with security forces in Damaturu.

According to him, "Two insurgents were killed during the exchange of gun shots between the Joint Task Force operatives and suspected Boko Haram members."

Egbuniwe, however, added that calm had returned to Damaturu and its environs. "People are going about their normal activities," he said.

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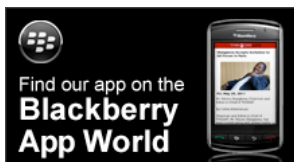
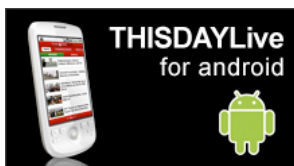
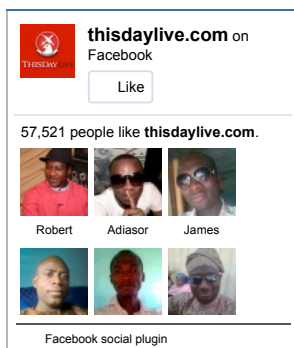
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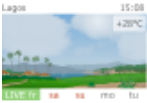
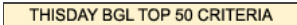
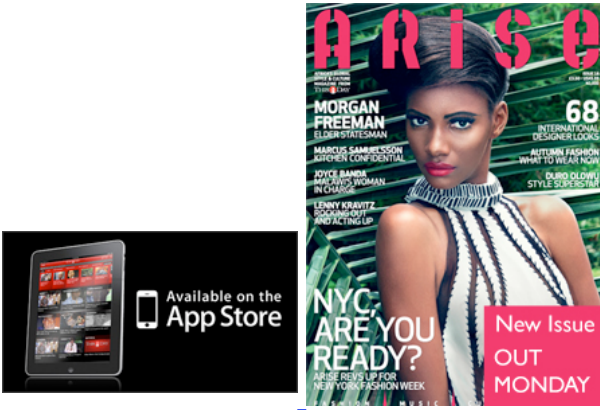
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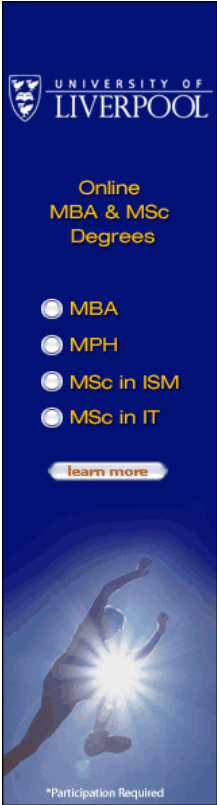
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