

Nigeria: Military Arrests Key Actor in Chibok Girls' Abduction

BY SENATOR IROGBU, JAIYEOLA ANDREWS AND MICHAEL OLUGBODE, 1 JULY 2014

Nigerian security forces have busted a terrorists' intelligence cell headed by a businessman who purportedly participated actively in the abduction of 279 schoolgirls from Government Secondary School, Chibok in Borno State on April 14.

The Director of Defence Information (DDI), Major-General Chris Olukolade, disclosed this in a statement Monday, saying the suspect had also coordinated many deadly attacks in the northern part of the country.

Olukolade said the man, Babuji Ya'ari, who is also a member of the Youth Vigilante Group popularly known as Civilian JTF, which he uses as cover while remaining an active terrorist, also spearheaded the murder of the Emir of Gwoza.

According to him, the suspect's main role in the group was to spy and gather information for the terrorist group, Boko Haram. "Babuji has been coordinating several deadly attacks in Maiduguri since 2011, including the daring attacks on customs and military locations as well as the planting of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in several locations in the town," he said.

The Defence spokesman said the arrest of the businessman, who is known to deal in tricycles, had also yielded some vital information and facilitated the arrest of other members of the terrorists' intelligence cell comprising women.

He disclosed that one of them, Hafsat Bako, had earlier escaped to Gombe State to avoid suspicion but was tracked and arrested. Prior to her arrest, he said Bako had coordinated the payment of other operatives on the payroll of the group. In her confession, she was said to have disclosed that a minimum of N10,000 is paid to each operative depending on the enormity of his or her task.

Olukolade further disclosed that another female suspect, Haj Kaka, who doubles as an armourer and a spy for the terrorist group had also been arrested.

"Until their arrest, all the suspects actively operated a terrorists' intelligence cell in collaboration with others still at large," he revealed. In another development, the DDI said troops deployed in Goniri, Yobe State, over the weekend, had an encounter with terrorists, resulting in casualties on both sides after the attack was successfully repelled. **Sect Razes Police Station, Kills Council Boss' Son**

Despite the key arrests by the military, members of Boko Haram yesterday invaded Shani Local Government Area of Borno State, where they set ablaze the divisional police station and many other building in the town.

They were said to have blown up shops and vehicles using improvised explosive devices and petrol bombs. The caretaker chairman of Shani council, Alhaji Modu Walama who was said to have escaped a series of attacks by assassins and terrorists in the recent past, narrowly escaped being killed by the terrorists who were gunning for him.

They were said to have attacked the council boss' family house in Walama and killed one of his sons when they discovered that the chairman was not in the house.

It was gathered from sources that the heavily armed terrorists invaded the town on motorcycles and laid siege and bombed the divisional police headquarters at about 2.45pm yesterday, after they realised that almost all the policemen on duty had fled the area. They were said to have snatched one of the patrol vehicles of the police and set it ablaze after they discovered that the engine was not in good condition.

After their assault on the police station, they proceeded into the town and shot sporadically into the air before heading towards Gwaskara village.



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