

9 Army Kills 12 Suspected Terrorists, lose Soldiers in Borno

Kingsley Nwazeh in Abuja

The Nigerian Army yesterday said 12 insurgents and two soldiers were killed when troops clashed with terrorist groups, Boko Haram and the Islamic State for West African Province (ISWAP) in Borno State.

A statement said troops of 152 Task Force Battalion in conjunction with the air component of Operation Hadin Kai on Sunday killed the 12 terrorists, who attempted to infiltrate the Forward Operational Base at Bula Yobe in Borno State.

The statement by the Director, Army Public Relations, Brig. Gen. Onyema Nwachukwu, said the terrorists attacked the location via an unsuspected crossing point, but were repelled by the vigilant troops.

"The land troops, in their usual dexterity swiftly and decisively engaged the

terrorists, subsequently forcing them to retreat, having lost initiative.

"The troops sustained the firefight and successfully neutralised 12 terrorists with several others fleeing with gunshot wounds," it said.

The troops captured

one gun truck, one self-propelled Gun-9, one Dushika gun and one mounted QJC Machine Gun. Other items captured are one light machine gun and five AK 47 rifles.

"Sadly, during the encounter, two soldiers paid the supreme sacrifice,

while five others sustained varying degrees of injury and have been evacuated by the air component of OPHK to a medical facility, where they are currently receiving medical attention," it said.

The army stated that the general area within FOB

Bula Yobe was calm and under the control of troops while further exploitation by the resilient troops was ongoing.

It said the Chief of Army Staff, Maj. Gen. Faruk Yahaya, had lauded the troops for their synergy and quick response,

which is in tandem with the ongoing rejigging of the counter-terrorism operations in the North-east.

He charged the troops to maintain the tempo and hold their ground, to deny the terrorists freedom of action.

COVID-19: FG Bans Travellers from South Africa, Uganda, Rwanda

Zambia Extends restriction to India, Brazil, Turkey

Olawale Ajimotokan in Abuja

The federal government has slammed a travel ban on passengers arriving from five African countries as part of measures to mitigate a potential third wave of COVID-19.

The countries are South Africa, Uganda, Rwanda, Namibia and Zambia.

The Chairman of the Presidential Steering Committee (PSC) on COVID-19, Mr. Boss

Mustapha, at a press briefing yesterday in Abuja, also announced the extension of measures taken a few weeks ago, denying entry into Nigeria to passengers who had visited Brazil, Turkey and India within 14 days preceding their arrival to the country.

Mustapha said the ban on a visit from those countries would now be extended by another four weeks before it is subjected to further

evaluation.

Mustapha, who is the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, said the decision was warranted by concerns and the dangers associated with the importation of such virulent COVID-19 strains to Nigeria.

He expressed concern that South Africa for example, recorded over 100, 000 cases of COVID-19 infections in the last week while

20,000 was recorded in the last 24 hours.

He urged members of the public not to lower their guards yet because of reported spikes in some countries and concern over the third wave in some countries.

The PSC listed the four major variants of concern across the world as Alpha (United Kingdom), Beta (South Africa), Gamma (Brazil) and Delta (India). He reiterated that the six-month ban imposed

on the first batch of 100 Nigerian travellers that violated the COVID-19 protocols is almost complete.

He reassured Nigerians that although the PSC had received appeals from some of the inbound passengers, whose travel documents were barred, sanctions will be imposed on violators of measures put in place to protect them and safeguard the country.