

3 killed, one arrested as JTF, terrorists clash in Damaturu

● **Army 'll never dabble into politics again—Ihejirika**

● **Promotes captors of Boko Haram commander**

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DAMATURU — Three suspected Islamic militants were, yesterday, killed in a gun duel between the sect members and the Joint Task Force, JTF while a lady was arrested in the process.

This came as the army announced, yesterday, that its officers who captured Habib Bama, the Boko Haram kingpin who masterminded the suicide bombings of Police headquarters, Abuja, Mogadishu Cantonment Mammy Market, and St. Theresa's Catholic Church,

to summon

by the police for "the crimes of embezzlement, fraud, misappropriation, misapplication, illegal virements, contract splitting, award of contracts to non-existing companies, outright stealing of police pension funds, among others".

The Senate also recommended that the team be immediately disbanded "as its continued existence and usurpation of statutory functions and violation of extant laws was illegal as also recommended by the two former Heads of Service, Chief Steve Oronsanye and Prof. Adedapo Afolabi as well as the incumbent, Alhaji Isa Bello Sali."

Madalla, Niger State among others, would be given automatic promotions to the next rank.

The clash between the sect members and the JTF which took place at about 5p.m. in Nyanya ward, a suburb of Damaturu was occasioned by explosions and exchange of gunfire which lasted several hours before the situation was brought under control.

Confirming the incident, Acting Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Gbadegesin Toyin, said at about 1700 hours of Saturday, the men of Operation Restore Order III in Damaturu launched a pre-emptive offensive attack on one building in Nyanya suspected to be a hideout of some members of Boko Haram, and on approaching the building, they heard gunshots from the building directed at the men of the JTF.

Toyin said the JTF quickly responded by opening fire on the residents of the suspected building and succeeded in killing three of the occupants while a lady was arrested.

Toyin added that the JTF also recovered arms and ammunition including AK47 rifles, magazines loaded with bullets from the building.

Army promotes captors of Boko Haram commander

Meanwhile, the Chief of Army Staff, Lt. General Onyeabor Ihejirika, disclosed that its officers who captured one of the commanders of Boko Haram sect, Habib Bama, would be promoted to the next rank even as he assured that the army would never dabble into politics again, saying that democracy has come to stay in Nigeria forever.

The army boss who spoke in Kaduna at a church service to mark the 149th anniversary of the Nigerian Army, also declared that the three Army officers, two Lt. Colonels and a Major who lost their lives in the ill-fated Dana Air crash in Lagos, would be given a 3-bedroom bungalow for sacrificing their lives in the line of duty.

His words: "Part of the transformation process going on in the Nigerian Army encourages officers and soldiers to be innovative and proactive especially as it concerns the war on terrorism. For instance, we have said that soldiers should take initiatives and be proactive in their duty post. An example of this is when the soldiers who saw Habib Bama, acted swiftly using the initiatives. On seeing him, they became alert, moved swiftly and rounded him up even though he resisted. They did not wait to get instruction from higher authority which would have led to the Boko Haram mastermind escaping.

It will be recalled that

Habib Bama later died of gunshot injuries he sustained during the exchange of gunfire by his men with soldiers to prevent his being arrested.

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On democracy, the COAS said: "Democracy has come to stay in our country and we have vowed that at no time should a soldier or army personnel dabble into politics. So he who must do the bidding of the army must not allow himself to be deceived or dabble into politics."

Emphasizing on the welfare of officers and men which he said was a fundamental aspect of his administration, Ihejirika noted: "For families of our officers who died in the ill-fated Dana aircraft, because they were the breadwinners and were on official call, the Army will build for each of these families, 3-bedroom flat to ameliorate the hardship they have suddenly been thrown into."

In his Sermon, Rev. Colonel Charles Iroagbu, Director of Army Chaplaincy urged officers of the Nigeria Army to always remain humble in the face of daunting security challenges and to remember that they are there to protect all Nigerians.