

## **Nigeria: 29 Islamists Killed in Two Raids**

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The Nigerian military says troops have killed 29 suspected Boko Haram militants in raids since Thursday.

A military spokesman, Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Dole, says troops killed 20 insurgents during an "offensive operation" late Friday in Bita, a town near the Cameroonian border. He says one soldier was killed during the operation.

In a statement obtained by VOA, Dole said Boko Haram had been using the area as a staging ground to launch attacks on villages and people driving through the region.

On Friday, the military said nine suspected members of the Islamist militant group were killed during a shootout in the country's northeast.

Officials said the fighting took place on Thursday, about 85 kilometers south of Maiduguri, a Boko Haram stronghold.

There have been no independent confirmations of the incidents.

Since 2009, Boko Haram has been fighting to impose a strict form of Islamic law on Nigeria's Muslim-majority north. The group has launched frequent attacks on police stations, jails, government officials and civilian targets.

On Wednesday, the United States named Boko Haram and the Nigerian-based militant group Ansaru as foreign terrorist organizations.

A U.S. counterterrorism official said the two groups were responsible for thousands of deaths in northeast and central Nigeria in recent years.