

## **Yobe**

In Katarko, Yobe State, one of the sources, simply identified as Goni, said the assailants came in large numbers but they were repelled by the military.

“They did not succeed here, the troops really tried. The insurgents were repelled and 17 of them were killed during the encounter,” he said.

He added that since the community was resettled some years ago, they have lived peacefully until the current attack.

“Since we relocated here from the IDP camp, we even forgot that attacks are happening. We only hear about it in neighboring towns. We thank the military for their efforts and pray that they sustain the tempo,” he said.

Another security personnel said the latest attacks, which add to a string of assaults in recent days, was the usual tactics by the Boko Haram members to loot arms from the military ahead of dry season.

“You know, those of us who have been in the theater for over a decade can understand this. It is not about the troops being weak. The insurgents fight during the rainy season when elephants grasses take over the bushes, and bad roads hinder movement of military equipment, because, once the dry season sets in, the troops will go after them.

“Now, they would gather arms and ammunition, build super and small camps ahead of the military operations,” he said.

## **We killed 50, injured 70 terrorists – Military**

Troops of the Operation Hadin Kai (OPHK), said they killed more than 50 terrorists, injured 70 others and repelled the coordinated attacks on military locations and communities in Borno and Yobe states.

Lt.-Col. Sani Uba, the Media Information Officer of the Joint Task Force North East, OPHK, in a statement in Maiduguri, said the simultaneous attacks occurred between midnight and 0400 hours on Thursday.

“The terrorists launched coordinated assaults on troops’ positions in Dikwa, Mafa, Gajibo, and Katarko, situated in Sector 1 (Borno State) and Sector 2 (Yobe State) respectively.

“In all instances, troops stood firm, fought gallantly and professionally repelled the attacks, dealing the terrorists a heavy decisive and bloody blow”, he said.

He said the coordinated offensive by the ground troops was supported by the air component of the OPHK, leading to the precision strikes on the terrorists.

“The combined ground and air efforts resulted in the neutralisation of over 50 terrorists across all the locations.

“Additionally, over 70 of the injured miscreants are still being pursued by ground troops supported by the air component in close coordination,” he added.

According to the statement, the troops also recovered 38 AK-47 rifles, seven PKT machine guns, five RPG tubes, two GPMGs and hand grenades along with thousands of assorted belted and loose rounds of different calibers.

“Intelligence further revealed that the terrorists who attacked Dikwa and Gajibo maneuvered from the Cameroon axis, while those that attacked Katarko emerged from the Timbuktu Triangle, a known terrorist enclave.

“Some of the gallant troops were wounded in action but are in stable condition. Some vehicles and buildings were also gutted by fire from the terrorists armed drones and RPG fire during the battle, especially in Mafa and Dikwa where a part of the defences were momentarily breached.

“The Military High Command has commended the gallantry, doggedness and renewed charge of the troops. Their steadfast performance once again reaffirms the military’s unwavering resolve and capacity to defend the nation’s territorial integrity against all threats, especially with the introduction of more boots and critical combat enablers into the Theatre,” he said.

### **Zulum speaks**

Recently, the Borno State governor, Prof. Babagana Zulum, pleaded with the Nigerian military to be more committed in the fight against insurgency.

The governor made the plea when he toured some border towns around Cameroon: Kirawa and Banki in Gwoza and Bama Local Government Areas.

“What matters is not the number of soldiers we need to keep here but how committed they are to fight back the terrorists during military operations.

“Above all, we need military operations. For sometime now, military operations have not been conducted in Borno State and that has been instrumental to the attacks we have been witnessing; the renewed insurgence attacks.

“We are pleading with the federal government, and the Chief of Defense Staff to release funds and procure equipment so that the military operations would begin since the rainy season is about to be over.

“But you have to take note of this very important thing, which is continuing military operations. We need not to just embark on operations after a few months, we slow down or withdraw,” he said.

Zulum, who stressed the need for the military to sustain operations throughout, said the United Nations resolution clearly states that military operations have to be followed by stabilisation, recovery, reconstruction and resettlement.

“That means, whenever we capture a certain place, we have to put in place mechanisms for all these things, otherwise, all the gains may be futile.

“But my only plea to the federal government as well as the Nigerian army military is, let us do everything possible to ensure that we sustain the peace that we have achieved,” he said.