Defence Minister: Tough times await terrorists, sponsors

• NAF airstrikes hit Borno's Timbuktu Triangle

From Defence Minister Christopher Musa yesterday came a warning to terrorists across the country that it would not be business as usual for them this year.

He also told collaborators of terrorists and bandits to desist forthwith or be prepared for the consequences of their action.

The Minister spoke during the 2026 Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Day Golf Tournament at the TYB International Golf Club, Abuja.

"Those who are still supporting bandits, criminals, insurgents and terrorists should stop immediately," he said.

"The friend of a thief is a thief. We urge all law-abiding Nigerians to provide timely intelligence.

"As soon as you see something, say something, so the Armed Forces can take swift action. We are always ready to respond."

Gen Musa described the annual Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance as a period to pay tribute to soldiers who have sacrificed their lives, including those who were injured in the line of duty.

He also commended the families of fallen heroes for their resilience.

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He said: "As usual, we use this period to celebrate both those who are serving and those who have passed on.

“It is important to honour their sacrifices and to let our troops know that Nigerians stand with them. Together, we will succeed.”

The Minister commended President Bola Tinubu for his unwavering support to personnel and their families.

He appealed to all Nigerians to continue to support the Armed Forces, stressing that the collective responsibility of security requires vigilance, cooperation, and patriotic commitment from every citizen.

The event was held in honour of serving and fallen members of the Armed Forces of Nigeria (AFN).

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Addressing the participants, the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), Gen. Olufemi Oluyede, highlighted the importance of public cooperation in achieving national security.

He said security is everybody’s business and expressed appreciation to Nigerians for their support over the years.

He called for more cooperation to fully achieve our mandate.

The CDS commended the armed forces for their courage and professionalism, saying,“it is not easy to go out there and sacrifice your life so that others can live in peace.

NAF jets hit terrorists in Borno, destroy enclave

The Nigerian Air Force (NAF) intensified the onslaught against terrorists on Thursday with airstrikes on suspected hideouts at AbbagaJiri in the Timbuktu Triangle , Borno State.

Spokesperson for the NAF, Air Commodore Ehimen Ejodame, said the strikes followed “ actionable, multi-source intelligence that confirmed active terrorist presence, structures, and concealed logistics facilities in the area.”

He said NAF air assets were employed in integrated surveillance and precision strike roles to engage identified targets.

“The operation was deliberately designed to degrade terrorist capability, deny sanctuary, and shape the battle space for ground forces, in strict adherence to established rules of engagement and the protection of non-combatants,” he said.

According to the spokesperson, the identified terrorist structures were decisively engaged and destroyed, denying the terrorists freedom of action, while a follow-up engagement neutralised armed elements observed converging on the location.

He said subsequent advances by ground troops into the area confirmed the effectiveness of the air strikes and validated the success of the joint air–land operation.

Ejodame said the Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), Air Marshal Sunday Aneke, noted that the success of the mission reflected the Air Force's resolve to dominate the air domain in support of joint operations.

"This operation demonstrates our unwavering commitment to delivering precise and decisive airpower in support of ground forces. We will continue to deny terrorists freedom of movement, sanctuary, and logistics wherever they seek to hide," the CAS said.