

Military airstrike kills terrorists, informants in Niger — Commissioner

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A military airstrike on Sunday morning reportedly killed scores of terrorists and some suspected informants in Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State.

PUNCH learnt that the airstrike also affected an unspecified number of persons near Kusu, one of the villages in Shiroro LGA.

Sources who spoke to PUNCH on condition of anonymity said the incident occurred in the early hours of Sunday.

One of the sources, a resident of Kusu, claimed that 12 persons were killed in a residence.

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“It happened around 5 a.m. No fewer than 12 people were killed in one of the residences in Shiroro,” he said.

The Niger State Commissioner for Homeland Security, Mr Maurice Magaji, confirmed the military airstrike on Sunday.

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He, however, insisted that those killed alongside the terrorists were informants and not civilians.

“It was a very successful military action against the terrorists. No civilian was killed. The only people killed were the terrorists and their informants in Shiroro.

“Before the military operation began, we warned civilians to evacuate, which they did. The only people left were the terrorists and their informants, and the informants are also terrorists. Anybody who was there must have been informants.

“You know how these terrorists operate. Their strategy is to divide themselves and attack communities. We ensured that they were targeted.

“We are still monitoring the situation. The people have been very helpful,” Magaji said.