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...LAUNCHES REPRISAL IN BIITA, MANY FEARED KILLED

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Hundreds of members of the Boko Haram Monday launched a reprisal in Biita and Izge villages in Borno State, two days after nearly 100 insurgents were killed in an ambush by Nigerian troops.

Security sources and residents told Daily Trust yesterday that over 350 insurgents armed with rocket propelled grenades emerged from the bush and attacked the military formation in Biita.

They thereafter proceeded to Izge, another village that had come under several attacks by the insurgents.

It was gathered that troops had a fierce battle with them in Biita but later withdrew, paving way for them to overrun the military facility in the village.

A top security source said, "Yes, the terrorists re-mobilized and attacked Biita after the heavy casualty they recorded at the weekend. Our troops withdrew for strategic reasons only and not out of fear. Remember that we recorded a huge success on Saturday and Sunday.

"The claim that our troops removed their uniforms and fled is absolutely false. It is part of war strategy to withdraw and mobilize for a bigger onslaught," the officer said.

Another officer said, "After the encounter of Saturday, ammunitions at the disposal of troops at the battle front were exhausted after nearly 100 terrorists were killed. And before the arms were replenished, the Boko Haram fighters regrouped and advanced... so, with insufficient weapons, troops had to withdraw".

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