

Military kills 5 ISWAP commanders, over 200 terrorists in Borno

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Over 200 members of Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) including five of their commanders have been killed in joint air and ground operations of the Nigerian armed forces, Daily Trust reports.

A top military source, people with insider knowledge of happenings in the North East and locals told this paper yesterday that the terrorists were neutralised in some of their hideouts near Bama in the central part of Borno State.

They said that ground troops and the Nigeria Air Force had conducted operations between Thursday and Friday, September 1 and 2 on many locations infested by ISWAP terrorists.

According to them, the operations had yielded results as over 200 fighters have been killed and over 70 who fled were drowned while trying to cross a river.

'How commanders, others were killed'

Our sources said the terrorists were struck severally for over 48 hours, hence the successes recorded by the military.

"It was an operation conducted by the Air Force component of the military and troops of 199 special forces and 222 battalions," a military operative said.

"They targeted the terrorists' hideouts in Gabchari, Sheruri, Mantari and Mallum Masari," he said. Another military source said, "In a well-planned and coordinated attack by aircraft and ground troops, terrorists' locations at Gabchari near Bama were struck severally and mopped up after the terrorists were observed fleeing upon sighting ground troops."

"Subsequently, aircraft under the Air Component were immediately scrambled to provide close air support (CAS) and engage the terrorists in successive passes. The strikes were deemed successful as lifeless bodies of terrorists were observed around the points of



■ CDS Gen. Leo Irabo

impact.

"This has also been collaborated by local sources who have expressed delight with the increased rate on attacks on terrorists and their enclaves, a situation that has allowed some of them to return to their homes and tend to their farms."

"Intel from various sources also indicated that over 200 terrorists were neutralized by the joint efforts of both air and ground troops including five ISWAP commanders. After the air strikes, the aircraft maintained close air support on the withdrawing troops until they returned back to base," he said.

Even though he did not give the actual number of terrorists killed, NAF Spokesperson, Air Commodore Edward Gabkwet said that the successful strikes and ground attacks around Bama were classical examples of the centrality of jointness as a critical factor in operational success.

"But we aren't carried away with this success as we shall continue to take the fight to the enemy until they lay down their arms," he said.

It was learnt that the villages attacked by the military are

as a result of bullet wounds were recovered around the bushes in Gaizuwa, among them were two Boko Haram Commanders including; Abou Zainab, Abou Idris."

A community leader in Bama said they saw fighter jets conducting air interdiction missions against the insurgents which resulted in neutralising dozens of fighters.

"It was evidently a successful mission and we hope our military operatives would continue to succeed," he said.

Daily Trust had reported on Sunday that over 70 suspected terrorists drowned in a river following air bombardment by the military.

It was gathered that military operatives in collaboration with Civilian Joint Task Force (JTF) had earlier killed over 20 members of Boko Haram insurgents in Sheruri village of Bama LGA on Thursday.

Sources said that after the Sheruri attack, the escapees drowned in a river around Dipchari village of Bama LGA on Friday.

"This morning (Saturday) around 8:30 am, they conducted a funeral for more than 50 of their fighters at Dipchari village and they continue with the search for the remaining terrorists," one of them said.

ISWAP, B/Haram using North East as training ground

An intelligent source told the Daily Trust yesterday that members of ISWAP and Boko Haram were using many cells in the northern, southern and central parts of Borno as training grounds.

"The truth is that they have been adequately subdued in their former stronghold along the Lake Chad region and therefore unable to carry out massive attacks."

"If you analyse happenings in the last couple of months, they had shifted their operations to the northwestern states of Kaduna, Katsina and Zamfara. Of course, this was before the recent increase in the military operations in the region."

"That notwithstanding,

ISWAP and Boko Haram still find it easier to train their recruits around Borno and this is for the obvious reasons of manoeuvrability and access to weapons from neighbouring countries.

"There is a need for the military to sustain the tempo of uprooting the training camps while sister agencies like Customs and Immigrations should increase surveillance around our borders to reduce arms proliferation so that we can bring an end to their campaign against the Nigerian state. We have been fighting this war for long and this is the time to recover," he said.

Insurgents attack Borno mosque, kill imam, three others

Terrorists have attacked a mosque in Borno, killing the Chief Imam of Gima and three other worshippers.

The attack, which occurred on Friday, also left many people injured as the terrorists invaded the Ngulde community of Askira-Uba Local Government Area of Borno State.

Daily Trust gathered that the terrorists, numbering about 20, launched the attack early in the morning on Friday by opening fire on worshippers who had finished their Fajir prayers at the Mosque. The terrorists also looted livestock and foodstuff and set ablaze two vehicles in the Ngulde community, which is located at some part of Sambisa forest in the state.

The story of the attack was disclosed on Sunday by the Councillor representing Ngulde Ward, Hon Bilyaminu Umar.

"Ngulde ward is one of the strongest communities in Askira-Uba local government ... I felt deeply shocked in sharing the grief of this latest attack when most of my people were busy tapping from this year's farming season."

"The attack, which occurred in the early hours of Friday, September 2, 2022, after the fajir prayers, claimed four lives and left many with casualties, while properties and businesses worth millions of naira were also destroyed and carted away by the insurgents," he said.