

Army rescues 386 in Sambisa forest 10yrs after abduction

From Hamisu Kabir Matazu,
Maiduguri

● Kills Shekau's ally, arrests Albarnawi's son

At least 386 individuals, mostly women and children, have been rescued by the army from the Sambisa forest after being abducted about a decade ago.

Brig.-Gen. AGL Haruna, the acting GOC 7 Division, said on Sunday while briefing journalists at the outskirts of the forest in Konduga LGA of Borno State following the successful conclusion of a 10-day operation dubbed "Operation Desert Sanity 111".

The operation, he said, aimed to clear the Sambisa Forest of all categories of terrorists and provide an opportunity for those willing to surrender to do so.

Gen. Haruna expressed optimism that more terrorists would surrender following the operation, citing the recent trend of surrenders.

"Our effort is to ensure that we clear remnants of terrorists in the Sambisa and give those willing to surrender the opportunity to surrender.

"With this operation, we envisage many of them will surrender as they have started.

"We also rescued some civilians on May 17, 2024; we rescued 386 and I am sure the number will increase," Haruna said.

Gen. Haruna commended the troops for their professionalism and urged them to maintain their high performance.

Some of the rescued individuals spoke about their harrowing ordeal, having spent a decade in captivity.

How soldiers killed Shekau's ally



■ Some of the victims rescued by the Operation Desert Sanity 111 of the Nigeria Army in Sambisa Forest, Borno State on Sunday

Photo: NAN

In another operational push, expert, Zagazola Makama, said, the troops on May 13, 2024 ISWAP founder's son eliminated Tahir Baga, a top surrenders commander of the Jama'at Ahl as-Sunnah lid-Da'wah wal-Jihad Nur, founder of the Islamic State of West African Province (ISWAP), better known as Boko Haram, during an offensive in the Sambisa Forest.

The operation, codenamed "Operation Desert Sanity III," targeted several terrorist enclaves deep in the forest, including Shababul Umma, Garin Panel Beater and Lagara Anguwan Gwaigwai.

Tahir Baga was said to have been eliminated alongside some of his lieutenants, while several others fled with gunshot wounds.

"Tahir Baga was a close ally to Abubakar Shekau. He was among the first sets who founded the Boko Haram movement in Maiduguri before moving into Sambisa Forest with the likes of Mamman Nur, Khalid Albarnawi, Abubakar Shekau, Kaka Ali, Mustapha Chad, Abu Maryam and Abu Krimima," a security

Nur Albarnawy, surrendered to the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps in Maiduguri on May 12, 2024.

Makama, quoting intelligence sources, said Mahmud Mamman Nur Albarnawy was confirmed to be the senior son of the late ISWAP founder after undergoing profiling at the command headquarters of NSCDC in Maiduguri.

The sources said men of the command had facilitated his surrender through his uncle in Gamboru Ngala after receiving information that he was willing to formally surrender to the Nigerian government.

Mahmud was handed over to the Bulunkutu rehabilitation facility for further documentation

and custody.

Troops gun down ISWAP commander

In another development, troops on May 14 neutralised Mallam Muhammadu, ISWAP's top commander in charge of Vehicle Bomb Improvised Explosive Device (VBEID) in Sambisa Forest.

Mallam Muhammadu was neutralised after troops made gradual but unprecedented incursions into the insurgents' dens in Ukuba and Njimia in Bama LGA of Borno State.

According to sources, Mallam had sent many underage children, including his three kids, into suicide bombings after conscripting them into believing that when they died, they would go to heaven.

47 B/Haram and ISWAP terrorists surrender to MNJTF

Meanwhile, 47 people associated with Boko Haram and the Islamic State's West Africa Province (ISWAP) have surrendered to troops of 403 Amphibious Brigade of MNJTF Sector 3, Nigeria.

Lt-Col Abubakar Abdullahi, the Chief Military Public Information Officer of the Multi-National Joint Taskforce (MNJTF), N'Djamena, Chad, said this in a statement.

He said the group included seven men, nine women, and 31 children, who turned themselves in at Kwatan Turare and Doron Baga, Kukawa LGA of Borno State.

"The surrendered individuals are currently in custody and undergoing further investigation to ascertain more details regarding

their activities and affiliations," he said.

Nigerian Army arrests soldier for illegal ammunition

Troops on May 15, 2024 apprehended its personnel for illegal possession of ammunition and explosives during a routine search operation by the Military Police K9 Team, at the Borno Express Terminal in Maiduguri, Borno State.

A statement by Maj-Gen Onyema Nwacbukwu, Director of Army Public Relations said, "The soldier, Lance Corporal Mubarak Yakubu, was found in possession of 756 rounds of 7.62 mm special ammunition and four 36 hand grenades, ingeniously concealed within a small bag of rice."

"This arrest underscores the Nigerian Army's zero-tolerance policy towards any form of illegal activity or contravention of military regulations by its personnel.

"Preliminary investigation has revealed that the soldier had been de-inducted from active theatre operations in March 2024 and was undergoing de-induction training at the Nigerian Army School of Infantry.

"The soldier was on a welfare pass from Jaji to Kaduna and Adamawa from April 30, 2024, to May 13, 2024, when the arrest took place.

"The soldier in question is currently in custody and a thorough investigation has commenced to ascertain the full circumstances surrounding this incident and to apply the appropriate disciplinary measures."