

# BOKO HARAM KILLS 20 IN BORNO, AS CAS CHARGES OFFICERS ON LOYALTY

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Posted on Friday, August 30th, 2013

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By Stella Odueme-Omona (Abuja) and Sunny Nwankwo (Maiduguri)

**At least 20 people were reportedly killed at the early hours of Thursday in Gwoza Local Government Area of Borno State, when gunmen suspected to be members of Boko Haram attacked them in their various houses while asleep.**

This is even as Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal Alex Badeh, has warned every military officer to exhibit total commitment and loyalty to the government or face the wrath of the land.

According to an eye witness, the Borno killing, which occurred at about 2:30am, saw many residential houses burnt down, including some of the occupants inside, while some of the victims who managed to escape were pursued and killed by the sect who were armed with dangerous weapons, including guns.

An indigene of Gwoza whose name was given as Musa Umar told our reporter that the incident took the people of the area unaware because it happened in the night.

"It was a terrible scene because most of the deceased were trapped in their burning houses because the attackers came in the night when people were already far asleep and set ablaze their houses," Umar said.

Meanwhile, Chief of Air Staff Badeh gave the charge on loyalty on Thursday in Abuja while decorating two officers, Afam Moses Chukwu and Sani Na'ya, who were promoted from Group Captain to Air Commodore.

He told the officers that in the military, promotion remains a privilege and never a right.

"There is so much of insecurity in the land, so all eyes are on us. If we consider you are loyal to the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the President and Commander-in-Chief, you would be promoted and if you are being disloyal, you would be caught and you would be sanctioned. You must be total in your loyalty to the constituted authority," Badeh stressed.

While noting that the military fair better under a civilian dispensation than in a military era when professionalism is thrown to the wing at the expense of the officers, he called on officers and men to protect the fragile democracy.

"We are the defenders of democracy, not usurpers. Let us take our work very seriously in order to safeguard our hard earned democracy. All over the world, military fair well in a democratic dispensation. In those days, there was no promotion, because we could not do what was expected of us that could earn us promotion. But now, everything is much better. So, we must defend our democracy better in order for us to be treated better."

The officers were among the 41 that were promoted Air Commodores in 2012.

32 of them were decorated first and this was followed by seven for logistics reasons.

Air Commodore Chukwu, on behalf of the two officers, pledged their absolute loyalty to the country, the Commander-in-Chief, the Chief of Air Staff, as well as the Nigerian Air Force.

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