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### Boko Haram: Troops Kill Over 200 Insurgents In Borno

Kareem Haruna

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At least 210 Boko Haram terrorists have so far been killed as a combined force of Nigerian soldiers on a special operation began raid of Sambisa forest, which is the insurgents' camp in Borno State, top security sources said.

Following the successful raid of Alagarno and Ajiri satellite camps in the eastern part of the state, the military, according to a top security officer who

spoke to LEADERSHIP Sunday in confidence, have mobilised a formidable force that have commenced a tactical offensive on Sambisa.

"We cannot say uhuru for now, but we are gradually penetrating Sambisa forest and so far over 210 armed Boko Haram terrorists have died as a result of a heated gun battle between our troops and the terrorists at the peripheral part of the Sambisa," said the source.

The troops, who were given marching orders by the presidency and the Defence Headquarters to end the Boko Haram conflict before the end of April, would not want to make mistakes this time round, he said.

LEADERSHIP Sunday gathered that villagers in some parts of Damboa local government area that shares borders with Sambisa forest have turned the area of the attack into some tourist centre as they went there to see the corpses.

The source said the attack on Sambisa was from all fronts because of the vast nature of the area which connects Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states. The ongoing operation in Sambisa forest has since forced some of the terrorists to flee into the city of Maiduguri to seek refuge. But most of them were arrested by the ever-vigilant members of the Civilian-JTF.

A top official of the Civilian-JTF in Maiduguri, Abubakar Malum, said they have so far arrested over 50 suspected Boko Haram members since last Saturday's twin-bomb blasts.

"Most of the arrested Boko Haram suspects were caught trying to invade the town with dangerous weapons like guns and improvised explosive devices.

"We have arrested one old man near the Air Force Base with a bomb and handed him over to the military. Most of them were arrested inside town while fleeing from the bush camps because the soldiers are now raiding their hideout," said Malum.

The renewed vigour in taking the attack to the Boko Haram camps came after the military had come under serious criticism by residents, especially the Civilian-JTF, who said the recent attacks on villagers soared because the military had been foot-dragging in raiding already identified camps of the terrorists.

Meanwhile, in Maiduguri, residents no longer enjoy the normal serenity of the night as everyone was being forced by the Civilian-JTF members in various neighbourhoods to keep vigil should some of the terrorists come attacking at night.

The military has not issued official statements to journalists in Maiduguri for some time now, a situation that has made it difficult for newsmen to confirm or deny reports.

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