



Air Force: 'Terrorist kingpins, over 100 insurgents killed in fresh airstrike'

THE Nigerian Air Force (NAF) has said it had killed over 100 terrorists

and some of their leaders in an airstrike in Borno State.

In a statement yesterday, NAF's Director of Public Relations, Edward Gabkwet said the airstrike took place yesterday.

He said the mission was conducted by the air component of Operation Hadin Kai at Mantari village in Bama Local Government Area.

The air force spokesperson said terrorist kingpins, Khalid Tukur, Maimusari, and Bakura Jega, were among those killed in the airstrike.

He said the attack came on

the heels of intelligence reports that a Boko Haram terrorist commander, identified simply as Ikirima, had moved to Mantari village with his gun trucks and was joined by other terrorists on motorcycles from other locations.

"Subsequently, the authorisation for an air strike was given, leading to the elimination of several of the terrorists and structures in the area.

"After the first wave of air strikes, some surviving terrorists found their way back to the same location to evacuate the

bodies of those neutralised in the air strike.

"This provided an opportunity for a follow-up strike on the same location which has been confirmed very successful as over 100 terrorists were neutralised with dozens others said to be in critical condition," the statement said.

Gabkwet said ISWAP and Boko Haram elements had perfected plans to resume hostilities in the wake of the Yuletide and the forthcoming general election.

"The timely intelligence re-

ceived on their plans, especially their attempt to attack soft targets in Bama thus helped in the successful air strikes which has reduced their will to regroup and attack innocent citizens," he said.

"There is no doubt that the progress and gains being made, especially by the air and ground troops, have greatly contained an upsurge of terrorists' campaigns within the Northeast in recent times," Gabkwet added.

The Air Force spokesperson explained that both air and ground troops had been "cautioned on the need to remain focused on the end state".