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Why Boko Haram/ISWAP fighters are surrendering en masse in Northeast, by DHQ

THE Defence Headquarters (DHQ) has said terrorists operating under Boko Haram, the Islamic State West African Province (SWAP) and other groups in the Northeast are surrendering en masse due.

It said the terrorists could not withstand the superior firepower the troops are unleashing on them, thus forcing them to have a change of heart.

The military high command, which spoke through the Director of its Media Operations, Maj-Gen. Edward Buba, stressed that the military aimed to replicate the same in other theatres of operation to restore peace and safety to all parts of the country.

It said ongoing operations across the country have "significantly diminished the military capabilities of terror groups and denied the terrorist the ability to carry out major offensives".

The DHQ added: "The situation experienced mostly these days are low level skirmishes and attacks on soft targets.

"We are aware that we are dealing with a shrewd, ruthless and brutal enemy that must be stopped from their acts of terror. Accordingly, the Armed

Tinubu departs for

• Successful airstrikes recorded near Lake Chad's Tumbuns excite NAF

• Nigeria, Niger military sign MoU to strengthen security

• Troops kill eight bandits in Kaduna, arrest two terror suspects' suppliers in Borno

From AbdulGafar Alabelewe, Kaduna and Musa Umar Bologi, Abuja

Forces are prepared to act with the relevant level of force that would be needed to dismantle these terror groups.

"Troops' strategy is to undermine the abilities of these terror groups and create conditions whereby they cannot carry out acts of terror or harm citizens. Accordingly, the military has prioritised targeting the terrorist leaders, commanders, foot soldiers as well as their collaborators."

Also, the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) has said the movement of terrorists to higher and drier grounds due to flooding in Tumbuns near the Lake Chad region was responsible for the success of its recent airstrikes in the area.

It said persistent rainfall had caused flooding in the terrorists' enclave, which forced them to seek refuge outside but made it possible for NAF to conduct precision airstrikes.

NAF's spokesman Air Vice

Marshal (AVM) Edward Gabwet said this in a statement yesterday in Abuja.

He said: "To confirm this, the NAF conducted Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) missions over the location on August 22, 24, and 26, which revealed several terrorists with some of their salvaged belongings tucked within four makeshift accommodations, some concealed under trees and thick vegetation.

"Consequently, precision airstrikes were authorised on the selected target areas, engaging and destroying most of the structures.

"A thick black smoke from one of the destroyed structures signified a storage area, probably designated as an armoury or a logistics storage area. Several terrorists were also neutralised in the process.

"It is important to note that the excess rainfall and swampy terrain may have inadvertently pushed the terrorists out of hiding, but it was the swift and decisive action of the NAF that

took advantage of the situation to strike a significant blow against them."

Also, the Nigerian military and its Nigerien counterpart have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to deepen bilateral relationship and explore opportunities to strengthen security cooperation between the two neighbouring countries.

Nigeria's Chief of Defence Staff, General Christopher Musa, and the Chief of Staff of the Nigerien Armed Forces, General Moussa Salaou Bar-mou, signed the agreement in Niamey, Republic of Niger.

A statement in Abuja by the Director of Defence Information at the Defence Headquarters, Brig-Gen. Tukur Gusau, said: "The Defence Chiefs acknowledged the significant impact of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons on security. They also recognised that the widespread accessibility of these weapons contributes to heightened instability and conflict in the region.

"They further agreed to intensify their efforts in curbing the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons, while pledging to collaborate on initiatives aimed at enhancing border security and supporting regional and international efforts to control and reduce the spread of these weapons."

Also, troops on fighting patrols have neutralised eight bandits in Birnin Gwari Local Government Areas of Kaduna State.

The state's Overseeing Commissioner in the Ministry of Internal Security and Home Affairs, Mr. Samuel Aruwan, announced this yesterday in Kaduna.

He said the troops also recovered ammunitions and motorcycles during the operation.

Aruwan said the troops started the fighting patrol in Kampanin Doka general area, where they had an encounter with bandits.

"On securing and searching the area, the troops recovered the following: three AK-47 rifles with eight AK-47 magazines - four empty and four load-

ed - with a total of 120 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition; one magazine carrier, six motorcycles, three mobile phones, two Baofeng radio sets and three pairs of civilian clothes.

"During the concluding leg of the patrol, further contact was made with bandits around Gayam general area. The troops neutralised one, as others were suspected to have escaped with gunshot wounds."

In Borno State, the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) said it arrested two suspects for allegedly supplying illicit drugs to the Boko Haram and ISWAP insurgents in the Lake Chad region.

The suspects were also alleged to be supplying uniforms and flag materials to the insurgents.

A statement yesterday in Maiduguri, the state capital, by spokesman of the MNJTF, Lt-Col. Olaniyi Osoba, said: "In a separate operation, another suspect was arrested along the Gubio-Damasak road.

"The suspected terrorists' operative was driving a blue Toyota pickup vehicle with registration (Yobe) JAK 49 XA and was found with two sacks containing 19 bundles of clothing materials..."

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