

## TOP STORIES

## Boko Haram beheads military pilot •They are barbaric, we'll rout them —Defence Hqts

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Boko Haram has released a video that shows charred plane wreckage and the beheading of a man identified as a pilot of a missing Nigerian Air Force jet, bolstering the group's claims that it shot down a fighter plane.

The Associated Press (AP) which reported details of the footage on Friday said the video was made available to it "through the same channels used previously."

The video, according to the AP, shows a kneeling man in a camouflage vest with his right hand in a sling, with a fighter hovering over him with an axe, which is later used in the beheading.

Speaking in English, the victim identifies himself as a Wing Commander in the Nigerian Air Force and says he was undertaking a mission in Kauri area of northeast Borno state.

"We were shot down and our aircraft crashed," he says. "To this day I don't know the whereabouts of my second pilot."

The insurgents have stolen military hardware from Nigerian forces, probably including anti-aircraft weapons.

Nigeria's Defence Headquarters suggested in a blog that the insurgents had manipulated images and cloned "another Shekau" who they claimed had been killed a long time ago.

In the video, the man identified as Shekau says Boko Haram is implementing strict Shariah law in areas of northeast Nigeria under its control. Examples are shown, including the stoning death of a man apparently accused of adultery; the amputation of the hand of a young man accused of theft; the lashings of a man and what appears to be a girl covered in a hijab.

The video ends with a show of burnt-out plane parts in rugged bush. Two pilots and an Alpha jet have been missing since September, 11 when it left Yola, Adamawa State capital on a bombing mission against Boko Haram.

The Nigerian Military, however, reacted to the beheading of the pilot, describing it as a barbaric act that would further spur it to rout the terrorists.

In tweet by the Director Defence Information, Major General Chris Olukolade, the Military declared that the act would not deter troops from comprehensively routing the terrorists from their hideouts.

The military assured Nigerians that no level or amount of barbaric display of bestial atrocities would distract the Nigerian military from sustaining the tempo of ongoing operations to decimate, degrade and bring the remnants of the terrorists.

The military spokesperson concluded by urging Nigerians not to despair.

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