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## Troops Overpower Terrorists In Seven-Hour Battle Over Borno Town

As NAF decimates ISWAP technical base, kills scores of terrorists

By Chris Agbambu - Abuja

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Hundreds of residents of Gubio community in Borno State on Sunday trooped out to sing the praises of the gallant troops of the Nigerian Army who confronted the heavily armed Boko Haram/ISWAP terrorists who attempted to overrun the community.

They made their feelings known when the Borno State governor, Babagana Umara visited the community to see things for himself.

Narrating the efforts put in by the troops, the residents told Umara that the soldiers engaged the insurgents in a fierce gun battle for seven hours (between 6.00 p.m. and 1.00 a.m.) before they could push them back.

During the visit to Gubio, the governor, who was accompanied by the member representing Gubio, Kaga and Magumeri federal constituency, Usman Zannah and some government officials, visited headquarters of the 5 Brigade of the Nigerian Army.

At the meeting with the military were the Theatre Commander, 'Operation Lafiya Dole', Major General Benson Akinroluyo; Colonel I.A Ajose, the Brigade Commander; the caretaker chairman of Gubio, Zannah Modu Gubio, and other government officials.

The caretaker chairman told the governor that were it not for the gallant resistance by the soldiers, the insurgents could have gained control over Gubio on the eve of Sallah.

Assuring the governor of the determination of troops to engage the terrorists to submission, Major-General Akinroluyo said the army was now changing strategy, part of which includes operational movement of troops from one location to another.

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Responding, Governor Umara praised the 5 Brigade for the gallantry and patriotism of soldiers under the command.

He said the Borno State government would sustain its support for the military by interventions on logistics, funding of volunteers in the civilian Joint Task Force (JTF), hunters and vigilantes who complemented the military in fighting insurgents as well as continued mobilisation of citizens to cooperate and support the military.

The governor, who later visited the palace of the district head, assured them of the military's continued presence.

He used the occasion to present additional patrol vehicles to more than 300 volunteers of the civilian JTF and vigilantes helping with community surveillance, intelligence gathering and sometimes, fighting alongside the military in frontlines.

Meanwhile, as the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) continues its intensive air strikes being conducted under the auspices of 'Operation Green Sweep 3', more successes have been recorded as the Air Task Force (ATF) of 'Operation Lafiya Dole', last Friday decimated a major tactical base of the Boko Haram Terrorists and killed scores of their fighters at Izza on the fringes of the Sambisa Forest in Borno State.

The Director of Air Force Public Relations and Information, Commodore Ibikunle Daramola, in a statement made available to the Nigerian Tribune, said the location was designated for attack after series of Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) missions had established that the location was being used as a staging area from where the Boko Haram elements launch their attacks.

According to him, the ATF scrambled 3 Alpha Jet aircraft to attack the location, with the timing synchronised to inflict maximum damage and mortality on the terrorists.

He said as a result, there was a massive devastation on the affected target, while scores of terrorists were killed in the process.

The NAF spokesman added that the ATF, operating in concert with surface forces, would sustain its efforts to completely destroy all remnants of the terrorists in the North-East.



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