

Police chopper shot, 250 bandits killed

Battle against Ansaru terror group in Kaduna

By Wale Akinselure

USING sophisticated anti-aircraft rifles and GPMG, a group of bandits and kidnapers located in Kuduru Forest, Kaduna State, on Wednesday shot at a police Bell helicopter, with the pilot and co-pilot sustaining varying degrees of injuries.

The attack on the police helicopter came when special operatives of Operation Puff Adder of the Nigeria Police, backed by the Special Forces of the Police

Airwing, was providing aerial and intelligence cover for the ground troops who launched an offensive on Kuduru forest, which hosts operational camps of the Ansaru terror group.

However, the injured pilot and co-pilot were able to wriggle their way out of the onslaught to land the aircraft at the Air Force Base in Kaduna.

According to Force Public Relations Officer, Force Headquarters, Frank Mba in a statement, the injured officers sustained "non-life threatening injuries" and

were in stable condition.

The police in the operation, however, killed over 250 "high-profile" members of the Ansaru group who were fingered to be behind series of terror-related violence, kidnappings, gun-running, cattle rustling and other crimes across the country.

"Special Operatives of Operation Puff Adder of the Nigeria Police backed by the Special Forces of the Police Airwing, in a daring offensive operation, stormed one of the largest operational camps of the Ansaru Terror

Group (also housing other bandits and kidnapers) located in Kuduru Forest, Birnin Gwari, Kaduna State and successfully neutralised over 250 high-profile members of the Ansaru Terror Group.

"The operation which commenced in the early hours of today, February 5, 2020, was carried out by a combined team of operatives of Operation Puff Adder made up of the Police Mobile Force (PMF), Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU), Special Forces, Intelligence Response Team

(IRT), Special Tactical Squad (STS) and Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS).

"The operation was necessitated by actionable intelligence linking terror and criminal elements in the super camp to series of terror-related violence, kidnappings, gun-running, cattle rustling and other heinous crimes across the country.

"Unfortunately, during the operation, a police Bell helicopter, which provided aerial and intelligence cover for the ground troops came under attack from the bandits using sophisticated anti-aircraft ri-

fles and GPMG.

"Commendably, the pilot and the co-pilot who demonstrated uncommon courage and expertise, successfully landed the aircraft at the Air Force Base, Kaduna without further incident. They were thereafter evacuated for medical treatment. Both officers who sustained non-life threatening injuries are currently receiving treatment and are in stable condition.

"The police helicopter has since been flown out of the Kaduna Air Force Base by police pilots en-route to Abuja," the statement read.