

# 17 soldiers killed, scores abducted in fresh Boko Haram attack

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Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Tukur Buratai

## ***Kayode Idowu, Maiduguri***

No fewer than 17 soldiers were killed, while many others were abducted in two confrontations on Friday and Saturday between the military and Boko Haram insurgents on Bama-Gwoza highway

It was, however, gathered that the number of casualties on the Boko Haram side were high, although it could not be ascertained as of press time.

The insurgents were said to have initially attacked Firgi, 20 kilometres north of Pulka along the road from Gwoza to Bama on Friday.

They were said to have killed 13 soldiers in the crossfire that took over two hours.

The insurgents were said to have forced some of the soldiers to retreat.

Sources added that the insurgents carted away some arms, ammunition and vehicles belonging to the Nigerian Army.

One of the sources said, “During the crossfire started around 10pm, 13 soldiers were killed with four of their vehicles taken away.

“On Saturday, the insurgents came back to the same area to continue from where they left.”

They were said to have attacked a military company at Banki junction on Bama-Gwoza Road around 10pm.

The battle was said to have lasted for about three hours.

Our correspondent gathered that the casualties on the side of the military were four, while that of the insurgents was not known.

The insurgents were also said to have abducted some soldiers and carted away arms and ammunition.

Reaction of the military could not be got as text messages to both Col. Sagir Musa, Army spokesman, and Col. Isa Ado, spokesman for the Military Joint Task Force on Counter-Insurgency in the North-East (*Operation Lafiya Dole*) were not responded to.

Meanwhile, the head of the counter-insurgency operation in the North-East, Maj. Gen. Olusegun Adeniyi, said Boko Haram had failed in the ongoing war against the country.

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Speaking at a party organised for the troops in Maiduguri on Saturday, Adeniyi who led a victory dance, said, “Boko Haram has failed, we are not going to let them get an inch of land in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states.”

Adeniyi, who called out officers and soldiers and guests at the get together to be part of the victory dance, said, “We are happy to dance and shame Boko Haram who do not want us to be happy.”

The Army Chief, who was joined in the dance by the Borno Deputy Governor, Alhaji Usman Kadafur, said, “I have made a covenant to go after Boko Haram, fight Boko Haram and end their menace.”

In his speech, Kadafur said, “We appreciate all the efforts by the military to safeguard our territory. We pray to God for guidance and repose of the souls of those that have paid the supreme price and we asked that God continue to be with their widows and orphans.”

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