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How Boko Haram ambushed, killed 70 soldiers – Military sources

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Fresh information has emerged on how Boko Haram insurgents ambushed and killed over 70 Nigerian soldiers of the *Operation Lafiya Dole* on Monday. The soldiers were killed in Gorigi near Allargano Forest general area of Borno State.

Top military sources at the battlefield told *Sunday PUNCH* that the insurgents fired a rocket-propelled grenade at the truck conveying the troops from the rear, killing no fewer than 70 Nigerian soldiers in the ambush.

The Coordinator, Defence Headquarters, Abuja explained on Tuesday that the soldiers were conveying bombs in a convoy during an ongoing operation, *Ayiso Tamonuma*, when the insurgents fired shots at their convoy and the bombs exploded. He said 47 soldiers were killed.

The Nigerian Army Operations Media Coordinator, Col Aminu Iliyasu, however, said on Friday that only 29 soldiers died in the ambush.

But, sources told our correspondent that many soldiers were killed in the attack because they were ambushed from the rear and that the terrorists must have got information about the movement of the troops from villagers.

One of the sources said, “The terrorists got information about the operation from the villagers, so they laid staggered ambush for us and attacked our troops from the rear. When soldiers move like that, the rear mainly supports elements of the advancing forces while the main fighting force would be ahead.

“That was why they decided to attack our convoy from behind, killing many of our colleagues. They fired rocket-propelled grenades at the truck conveying them and because they were carrying bombs, the impact was much. We are saddened by the attack but we won’t give up. Seeing many of our colleagues killed hurts a lot.”

Another source, who explained that while they could not totally dismiss connivance with some persons who should know, noted that the terrorists often get information from the villagers.

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The source said, “The terrorists have strong intelligence because some villagers are Boko Haram sympathisers, so our movements are not as discreet as they should be. Besides, we are always in uniform so they see us while moving. When they see our troops moving, they notify the terrorists.”

Asked what could make the villagers support terrorists instead of the soldiers fighting to protect them, the source said the insurgents must have ‘settled’ the villagers. “There can only be few reasons why villagers could do that and one of the likely reasons would be inducement.”