

Insurgents killed as NAF bombs Sambisa strongholds

18th April 2025

| By Solomon Odeniyi

The Nigerian Air Force on Thursday announced that two coordinated airstrikes had successfully neutralised several insurgent strongholds in Sambisa forest in Borno State.

The precision strikes, carried out under the Air Component of Operation Hadin Kai, targeted known insurgent enclaves in Kollaram and Arra—two areas identified as long-standing terrorist strongholds within the Sambisa general area and the Southern Tumbuns.

According to a statement released by the Director of Public Relations and Information at NAF Headquarters, Air Commodore Edward Gabkwet, the first operation was conducted at approximately 5:30 a.m. in Kollaram, following credible intelligence and surveillance footage that confirmed the presence of high-value terrorist commanders and operational facilities.

“In a bold display of force and precision, the Nigerian Air Force, under Operation Hadin Kai, executed two highly successful air interdiction missions on April 15, 2025, targeting terrorist strongholds in Borno State’s Sambisa general area and the Southern Tumbuns,” the statement read.

“The first strike occurred at approximately 5:30 a.m. in Kollaram, a known insurgent hub. Intelligence reports, corroborated by surveillance footage, confirmed the presence of high-value terrorist commanders and several operational structures, including those equipped with solar panels. NAF assets executed a precision strike, eliminating numerous fighters and disabling key infrastructure.”

Later in the day, at about 3:55 p.m., another strike was carried out in Arra, also within the Sambisa axis.

According to Ejodame, real-time visuals obtained from Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance missions revealed clusters of armed militants actively operating in the area.

“Precision-guided munitions were employed during the mission, resulting in the effective destruction of identified targets and significant disruption of the group’s operational capabilities,” he added.

Ejodame emphasised that the airstrikes form part of an ongoing and intensified aerial campaign aimed at degrading terrorist capabilities, dismantling leadership structures, and eliminating insurgent sanctuaries across the region.

Meanwhile, the Defence Headquarters said on Thursday that troops neutralised a notorious terrorist kingpin, Bello Kaura, in a precision airstrike conducted by troops of Operation Fasan Yamma.

Kaura was among the scores of terrorists neutralised by troops between April 10 and 16, 2025, according to the DHQ.

A statement by the Director, Defence Media Operations, Maj. Gen. Markus Kangye, said troops, in collaboration with other security agencies and hybrid forces, carried out a series of coordinated operations in Zamfara, Sokoto, Kaduna, Niger, Kwara States, and the FCT among others.

These operations, he said, were marked by fierce engagements with terrorists, leading to the killing of several insurgents, arrests of suspects, and recovery of a cache of arms and ammunition.

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“Between 10 and 16 April 2025, troops conducted fighting patrols and made contact with terrorists in Anka, Tsafe, Talata Mafara, Kaura Namoda and Maru LGAs of Zamfara State as well as Gudu, Isa and Tangaza LGAs of Sokoto State. They conducted operations in Giwa, Chikun and Birnin Gwari LGAs of Kaduna State as well as Bida LGA of Niger State.

“During the encounters, many terrorists were neutralised, including an identified terrorist kingpin, Bello Kaura, in an air interdiction, arrested some of them, while 17 kidnapped victims were rescued,” he said.

He also said troops thwarted oil theft worth over ₦262.7m and arrested suspects.

“During the week under review, Operation DELTA SAFE foiled oil theft worth over ₦262,702,150.00 only.

“The breakdown indicates: 117,395 litres of stolen crude oil, 22,050 litres of illegally refined AGO, 6,000 litres of DPK and 8,060 litres of PMS. Additionally, they discovered and destroyed 102 crude oil cooking ovens, 94 dugout pits, 18 boats, four speedboats, 56 storage tanks, 164 drums and 42 illegal refining sites. Other items recovered include pumping machines, drilling machines, galvanised pipes, tricycles, motorcycles, mobile phones and nine vehicles,” he said.

Kangye assured the citizens of the Armed Forces' commitment to protecting national sovereignty and ensuring the safety of all law-abiding citizens.

He said to deny the criminals freedom, the military would take the battle to them.

“We are taking the battle to the enemy to deny them freedom of action, making them thirst for surrender.

“I wish to reiterate the untiring commitment of the Armed Forces of Nigeria to dominate and act in defence of our nation's sovereignty while guaranteeing the protection of all law-abiding citizens to promote the betterment of our society.

“Our operations across all theatres remain focused, intelligence-driven, and in line with the highest standards of professionalism and respect for human rights,” Kangye added.

He called on the civil populace to continue supporting military operations.

Kangye said, “We once again appeal that the civil populace trust us and see us as friends and partners working for the general good and well-being of the nation. We recognise the sacrifices made daily by our gallant troops, and we salute their courage and dedication.”