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## Final push on Boko Haram

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BY OUR REPORTER ON FEBRUARY 12, 2015

COVER

### ■ Allied forces bombard Sambisa Forest, scores of insurgents killed

#### ■ Scores of insurgents killed

With the assemblage of soldiers from Nigeria, Chad, Niger Republic and Cameroon, the West African allied forces have launched what could pass for a final push on Boko Haram, in the bid to end insurgency.

This is coming at a time when the government of Niger Republic has declared a state of emergency in the Diffa region of the country, as part of its full-scale war against Boko Haram.

In an operations yesterday, military planes bombarded Sambisa Forest in Borno State, to incapacitate insurgents before ground troops moved in.

In the attack, Chadian troops of the allied forces killed scores of Boko Haram fighters in a battle in Gambaru yesterday.

According to a statement by the Chadian military, in N'Djamena, Boko Haram militants had launched a pre-dawn raid in the town, in a bid to overwhelm the soldiers, who had pushed them out of the border town. They were repelled and routed.

The insurgents were pushed out of Gamboru, which lies on the Nigerian side of the border with Cameroon, in the eastern fringe of Borno State, after which ground troops crossed over the bridge marking the frontier, after sustained bombardment. One Chadian soldier was killed in the operation, while eight others were wounded. Three Boko Haram vehicles were destroyed, and one was seized.

In a related development, the Niger Republic government yesterday declared a state of emergency in the Diffa region, along the border with Nigeria, which has been attacked repeatedly by Boko Haram in recent days.



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The announcement came after the country's defence minister raised the alarm over the situation in Diffa, where he said residents were fleeing over fears of further violence. "The state of emergency is proclaimed in the Diffa region for a period of 15 days," a statement read on state radio said. The measure will grant increased powers to security forces to act decisively, including to carry out searches.

Meanwhile, two female suicide bombers blew themselves up yesterday in Diffa, two security sources said following days of cross-border attacks by Boko Haram.

Authorities in Diffa searched house-to-house for Boko Haram suspects yesterday and arrested four men who arrived on a truck bound for Niger Republic's second largest city, Zinder, a military source said.

Schools in the town were closed and civil servants had left their posts to take their families to more secure towns elsewhere, said a police officer in the town.

Niger's parliament on Tuesday unanimously approved sending troops to northern Nigeria as part of the regional offensive.

Boko Haram attacked the town of N'Guigmi on Niger's border with Nigeria late on Tuesday with mortars and machine guns, but the attack failed, a Niger military source said.

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