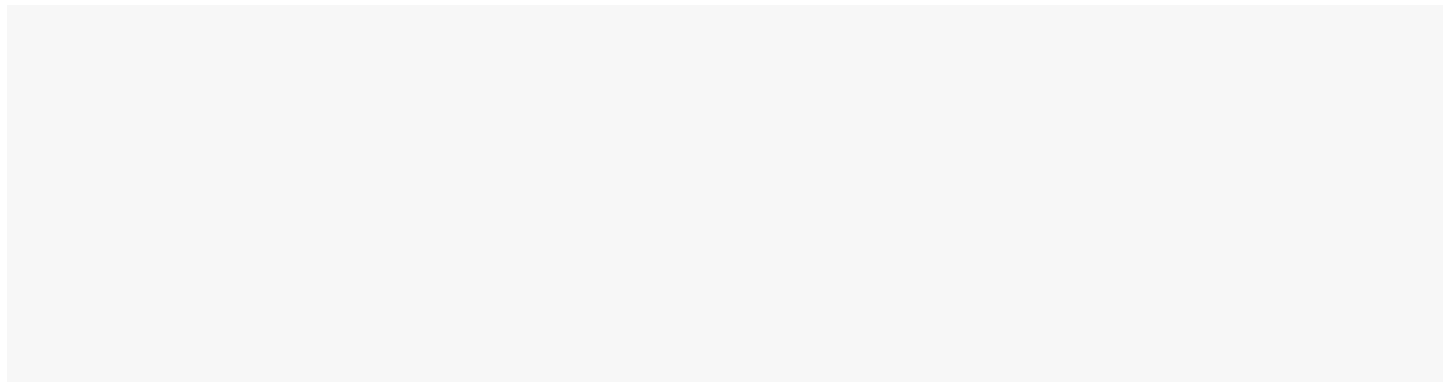


Boko Haram attacks Army commander's convoy, kills driver

- Borno gov stops soldiers from evacuating 2 communities as army investigates personnel over alleged extortion

8th January 2020



(LES) This picture taken on April 30, 2013 shows Nigerian troops patrolling in the streets of the remote northeast town of Baga, Borno State. Nigeria's military said on May 16, 2013 that it was ready to launch air strikes against Boko Haram Islamists as several thousand troops moved to the remote northeast to retake territory seized by the insurgents. A force of "several thousand" soldiers along with fighter jets and helicopter gunships have been deployed for the offensive in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa state, he added. AFP PHOTO/PIUS UTOMI EKPEI/PIUS UTOMI EKPEI/AFP/Getty Images

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A driver attached to Major General Olusegun Adeniyi, theatre commander in charge of Operations Lafia Dole, is feared to have been killed in an attack by Boko Haram on the commander's convoy in Borno State.

Two soldiers were also injured and some vehicles damaged during the ambush on Monday as Adeniyi was returning to Maiduguri after a visit to Jakana, where the insurgents struck on Saturday.

Military sources said the commander had gone to encourage troops but on his way back around 7pm, insurgents opened fire on his convoy.

Army headquarters in Abuja, yesterday, confirmed the attack, but said the terrorists suffered heavy casualties and most of their equipment were recovered by soldiers who fought back with superior fire power.

Army spokesman, Colonel Aminu Iliyasus, in a statement said: "In a clear display of misguided desperation to stage a reprisal following the recent neutralisation of several of their top

commanders by troops of Operation Lafiya Dole, on January 6, some marauding elements of the Boko Haram insurgents laid and eventually sprung an ambush against the convoy of the theatre commander operation Lafiya Dole, Major General Olusegun Adeniyi.

“The commander’s convoy came under the criminals ineffective and uncoordinated fire from anti-aircraft guns, machine guns, rocket propelled grenades and some of their foot soldiers about 2 Kilometres to Auno in Kaga L.G.A of Borno while returning from Jakana where he visited troops’ location following his meeting with the governor of Borno, Professor Babagana Zulum at Auno.

“In a commendable demonstration of bold action in battle, the theatre commander led the gallant troops of his convoy to engage the Boko Haram insurgents with superior fire power, subduing them, and thereafter, assaulting the ambush site with his men, thereby causing the criminal insurgents to flee the location in disarray. Other senior military officers in the theatre commanders’ convoy at the time of the ambush include the deputy theatre commander, Major Gen. MG Ali, Brig. Gen. E.I. Eze, Brig. Gen. S.I. Igbinomwanya and Lt A.A. Tejuoso. In the aftermath of the encounter, several Boko Haram insurgents were decimated. Additionally, 20 rounds of 7.62mm special ammunition, 2 rounds of 7.62mm NATO ammunition, one camouflage trouser, one Nigeria Police Force fragmental jacket, 2 AK 47 rifles and 3 AK 47 rifle magazines were captured from the fleeing insurgents. Thereafter, Major Gen Adeniyi and his convoy continued their trip, and have since returned safely to headquarters. Regrettably, two soldiers were wounded in action during the encounter.

“The soldiers are currently receiving treatment at a military medical facility and are responding positively.

“To this end, the theatre commander, on behalf of the Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General Turkur Yusufu Buratai congratulates the troops for their resilience and courage and urges them not to relent in their efforts until all the remnants of the Boko Haram and ISWAP criminal insurgents are completely annihilated and defeated.”

The attack on Gen Adeniyi was the third in the series of the terrorists ambushes on military commanders since the commencement of the counter-insurgency operations.

Boko Haram had attacked the convoy of Lt Gen. Tukur Buratai and former General Officer Commanding (GOC), 7 Division Nigerian Army Maiduguri, Brig Gen Victor Ezegwu.

Barely 24 hours after accusing soldiers of extortion, Governor Zulum has called on military authorities to rescind the decision to relocate Minok and Jakana communities in Kaga Local Government Area.

Zulum made the call when he visited the two communities located along Maiduguri-Damaturu road, yesterday. In furtherance of its clearance operation against remnants of the insurgents, the military planned to relocate inhabitants of the communities to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps in Maiduguri.

“I call on the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lt. Gen. Tukur Burutai, to refrain from the action. In as much as possible, we need to commend the Federal Government’s effort in the counter insurgency operation, but we are not in support of displacing these communities. We are fully behind the military and police with a view to condon and conduct search exercise in the communities to arrest and prosecute all those involved in the nefarious activities. But we do not want the communities to be displaced,” he said.

Zulum noted that relocation would compound humanitarian crisis, adding that adequate arrangements must be put in place to facilitate smooth relocation and resettlement of affected communities.

The army, however, expressed unhappiness over the utterances made by the Borno State governor, Mohammed Zulum, accusing soldiers of extortion.

The army feared the governors statement could be counterproductive and capable of reversing gains recorded in the fight against insurgents and other criminal elements.

It, however, promised to investigate the allegations and punish anyone found culpable.

Governor Zulum had visited a security check point along Maiduguri-Damaturu where he openly condemned soldiers for demanding money from travelers.

Zulum said his visit to Auno and interface with soldiers on Monday afternoon was accidental and his reaction on the extortion by soldiers at the check-points was spontaneous and not planned or intended to underrate military efforts in the war against Boko Haram and terrorism.

His spokesman, Isa Gusau, in a statement after the governor paid a return visit to the scene, yesterday, to have an interface with the soldiers, explained that Governor Zulum had stopped suddenly at the check-point on his way to Jakana to visit the victims of Boko Haram attack in the town.





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