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SHARES VIEWS

Molly Kilete, Abuja

The Defence Headquarters has confirmed the killing of 47 soldiers by the Boko Haram insurgents in Borno state.

The soldiers from Operation Lafiya Dole were allegedly killed while on a clearance operations at Gorgi, area of the state.

This however contradicts the earlier report that 150 soldiers were killed. Several of the soldiers are said to have escaped and missing in action at the time of filing this report.

The casualties allegedly include the Commanding Officer of the battalion, the Second-in-Command, the Artillery Major and the Sector 2, Air liaison officer and some Airforce officers.

According to a source, the deceased were burnt beyond recognition after the insurgents attacked the rear convoy where the Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher (MBRL) and Sino truck (yellow bucket) loaded with soldiers, were positioned.

Coordinator of Defence Media Operations, Major-General John Enenche, said: “As you know, we are in a fluid conflict situation and our gallant troops are out there at the front lines. Ladies and Gentlemen, between 21 and 23 March, troops of Operation Lafiya Dole were on clearance and fighting patrol operation to Gorgi in Borno State which was successfully done.

However, during consolidation they were ambushed by the terrorists.

“Sadly, we suffered some casualties in the unfortunate attack. However, the Air Component of Operation Lafiya Dole scrambled immediately and provided Close Air Support to the ground troops.

“While the Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) platform as well as the fighter jets engaged the terrorists killed some of them and immobilized a gun truck.

“Some others who attempted to withdraw, were also mopped up by the jets in follow-on attacks.

“The Defence Headquarters commiserate with the families of our fallen gallant heroes who paid the supreme price in the course of defending our fatherland.

“We assure Nigerians that the armed forces and other security agencies in furtherance of the objective of restoring peace and security in the North East and other parts of the country will continue to sustain the offensive against the enemies of our nation”.