

Monday 29 July, 2013 Updated 13:28

[f My Account](#) [About Us](#) [Contact Us](#)



- [Home](#)
- [NEWS](#)
- [THISDAYBUSINESS](#)
- [THISDAYSPORTS](#)
- [POLITICSTHISDAY](#)
- [LIFE AND STYLE](#)
- [HEALTH AND WELLBEING](#)
- [BACKPAGE](#)
- [Editorial](#)
- [Thisday-tv](#)

Articles

[HOME](#) > [NEWS](#)

Gwoza Operation Unsuccessful, But Shekau Sighted

28 Jul 2013

Views: 21,507

Font Size: [a](#) / [A](#)



Defence Headquarters

- We'll hunt down the terrorists, says DHQ

By Senator Iroegbu

Military sources have revealed that the highly specialised operation by the Joint Task Force (JTF) to hunt down the leader of the Boko Haram Islamic sect, Sheikh Abubakar Shekau, believed to be holed up in Gwoza hills in Borno State was unsuccessful as a result of the difficult terrain.

The operation, which took place last month, however, claimed the life of Major A.T. Fambiya on June 26, 2013. Fambiya was one the two officers and 13 soldiers recently given national burial at the military cemetery in Abuja.

A military source told THISDAY that Fambiya was co-opted into the operation because of his knowledge of the area, having hailed from Gwoza town.

"However, like the Tora Bora mountainous caves in Afghanistan where Osama Bin Laden hid before he later escaped from the US onslaught; the operation

to capture Shekau was not successful because of the bad terrain", the source said.

The source declined to give details, saying that would be exposing "high security issues," adding, however, that the area around Gwoza hills was dotted with lots of caves.

"I want to tell you that there is a massive deployment of troops in that area but we did not succeed because you know there are lots of caves. I just know that, as at this moment, I don't see him still being confined there".

However, another military source said Shekau might have been confined to a location where the military are in constant knowledge of his movement and that efforts are in top gear to capture him in spite of the failure of last month's operation.

The source said the Boko Haram leader is being figured out by the military and that his days are numbered as they are ever determined to finish the job despite the difficult environment around him.

"Yes we can confirm that the goon is cornered and his days as a terrorist are certainly numbered. It's not going to be easy though because Gwoza hill is a very long stretch of hilly terrain but the good thing is that the troops have an idea of exactly how to go about finishing the job," the source added.

The Director of Defence Information (DDI), Brig-Gen. Chris Olukolade, while responding to THISDAY enquiries on the issue last night refused to talk on the matter but said reports of the JTF operations would be made available as and when due.

Olukolade warned journalists against reporting on operational issues that could jeopardise the military and security strategies, citing a report in one of the national dailies as an example.

He vowed that the military would pursue the terrorists with vigour until they are captured, killed or forced to surrender unconditionally according to the mandate of the emergency rule proclamation.

He said: "All I can say at the moment is that the mandate given to the security forces to hunt down all terrorists or insurgents is being pursued with all necessary vigour and sense of duty and responsibility.

"Every vital breakthrough recorded in the process will continue to be duly communicated to Nigerians as and when appropriate.

"There is no need to engage in speculation that could jeopardise the integrity of ongoing operations or mislead our citizens please."

The military had waved off claims by the Presidential Committee on Amnesty that it had reached ceasefire agreement with the Boko Haram, and had instead vowed to crush the insurgents.

According to one of the military sources, "the main target now is to take out Shekau, and that is a matter of time now".

Tags: [News](#), [Nigeria](#), [Featured](#), [Gwoza Operation](#)

Comments: 0

Rating:

(2.5)

[Print](#)

[Tweet](#) 8

10

Related Articles

[Latest News](#)

- [BMW Electric Offered With Spare SUV to Ease Range Anxiety](#)

[Read more...](#)

29 Jul 2013

- [PDP Constitutes National Disciplinary Committee](#)

[Read more...](#)

29 Jul 2013

- [Italy Bus Crash Leaves 36 Dead](#)