

NEWS

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Scores of ISWAP Fighters Killed in Week-long Air, Ground Offensive in Damasak, Borno

● *Three soldiers killed; Zulum says 21 killed, 18 injured*

Kingsley Nwezeh in Abuja and
Michael Olugbode in Maiduguri

Air and ground offensive launched by the military in the past one week decimated scores of fighters of the Islamic State for West African Province (ISWAP) in Damasak, Borno State while three soldiers fell in the attack.

However, Borno State Governor, Prof. Babagana Zulum, said 18 persons lost their lives in the attack on Damasak by terrorists while 21 others, who were injured, were receiving treatment in various hospitals.

A Nigerian Army statement said a senior Commander of ISWAP, Bukar Gana Fitchmeram (a.k.a Abu Aisha), and scores of his fighters who were on revenge mission at Damasak, fell to the

fire power of Nigerian troops on Thursday.

It said the terrorist and his fighters met their Waterloo as they made a come-back following the neutralisation of 12 high value ISWAP commanders in Mobbar Local Government Area of Borno State in a week-long air and ground operations by the Nigerian military.

"In a well-coordinated ground bombardments and aerial strikes by the Nigerian military on various locations in the North-east, the terrorists who were denied any sanctuary or respite desperately conducted two separate failed attacks on Gajiram and Damasak," it said.

The war update issued by the Director, Army Public Relations, Brigadier-General Mohammed

Yerima, said the deadly air strikes conducted on Tudun Wulgo, Zari and Tumbun Alhaji, Kusuma, Sigir in Ngala and Arijallamari, in Abadam, Marte and Ngala Local government Areas, led to the killing of top ISWAP leaders.

It listed the commanders that perished in the airstrikes to include Mohammad Fulloja, Ameer Mallam Bello, Ba'a kaka Tunkushe, Abu Muktar Al -Ansari, Ameer Abba Kaka, Abu Huzaiifa, Ameer Modu Kwayem, while Goni Mustapha who was the Chief Imam of the ISWAP escaped with bullet wounds.

It said troops' artillery bombardment and air strikes also resulted in the elimination of

two top ISWAP leaders notably Abu-Rabi and Muhammed Likita as well as scores of their troops and body guards around the axis of Kusuma, Sigir in Ngala and Arijallamari in Abadam local government areas.

The terrorists' storage facilities that housed weapons used to conduct several attacks were also targeted and destroyed in the air raid by the Air Component of Operation Lafiya Dole.

It stated further that "on the night of Saturday, April 10, three other terrorist Commanders including Ameer Umar, Abu Ubaida and Abu Salim were ambushed and killed by troops around Wulgo/Logomani axis

close to Cameroon borders while attempting to attack locals and rustle their cows.

"The devastating air strikes and artillery bombardment on the ISWAP camps had pushed the surviving elements to conduct desperate attacks and looting missions for food and drugs for their wounded colleagues."

According to the update, on April 11, the Nigerian military bombardments eliminated scores of ISWAP/Boko Haram terrorists on five gun trucks in Damasak.

The update affirmed that some of the terrorists were hit close to the perimeter fencing, while others were neutralised while attempting to loot food

items in a store belonging to the United Nations as well as drugs and ambulance.

However, three soldiers and some civilians lost their lives while properties were burnt in the town.

"Some of the terrorists still got access to the town burning and looting items before vacating the area. It is also noteworthy that Damasak has been attacked several times and failed," it said, while noting that "troops' fighting spirit remains very high in spite of the nefarious activities of some local informants who often tip the Boko Haram/ISWAP terrorists on troops' movements and positions," he said.

