

NAF: Air Strikes Killed Scores of Terrorists in Katsina State

● *Fighter jet mistakenly bombed villagers*

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The Nigerian Air Force (NAF) said last night that fighter planes struck terrorists near Zakka and Umadan Villages in Safana Local Government Area of Katsina State.

The air operation followed what it said was careful coordination between the air component of Operation Hadarin Daji and the Nigeria Police which resulted in the elimination of scores of terrorists near Zakka and Umadan villages in Safana Local Government Area of Katsina State.

But there were fears that lives of some of the villagers may have been lost and several others injured after the NAF jets accidentally bombed them.

"While on an air reconnaissance mission, intelligence was received by the air crew of the sighting of terrorists between Zakka and Umadan Villages.

"The terrorists had earlier overwhelmed the police outpost at Zakka Village after overrunning the police outstation at Dutsen Ma and shooting the Police Area Commander.

"The NAF aircraft thus proceeded to the location and after thorough scan of the area, the terrorists were eventually detected at a Village about 7.1 Km West of Safana town and further west of Yartuda Village.

"Some locals were also sighted fleeing the village as the terrorists had ransacked and taken some of the locals as hostages during their house-to-house search of the community," a statement by Nigerian Air Force Headquarters said.

"The terrorists were later tracked until they had isolated the hostages to a building about a kilometer away from their massing up area near the village. It was at this point

that the permission for an air strike was given.

"Subsequently, the location was struck by NAF aircraft in successive passes with scores of unsuspecting terrorists eliminated. Fortunately, as had been anticipated, the hostages were later seen escaping after the successful air interdiction by the NAF aircraft.

"The aftermath of the airstrike was that some of the villagers who had dispersed when the terrorists first invaded the village were seen returning. The villagers also confirmed that over 24 terrorists were eliminated in the carefully planned and coordinated air strikes," it stated.

The statement noted that similar success was also recorded elsewhere in the same Local Government Area as intelligence reports received in the evening of July 5, 2022 had revealed that some terrorists with herds of cattle were

observed dispersed in Abdulkareem Camp near Mahuta Village in Safana Local Government Area of Katsina State. Abdulkareem, a well-known terrorist kingpin, had been a source of kidnapping and killings of innocent citizens residing near Mahuta Village and environs.

"Consequently, a NAF aircraft was dispatched to the general area where it remained overhead the area of interest until the early hours of July 6, 2022 when the first human was sighted. After sighting about 18 terrorists amassing within the location, the aircraft engaged the targets.

"The fall of shot was observed within the compound and the impact radius of the blast was effective on other terrorists hiding in the compound. Feedback received has indicated that the strikes were precise and successful", it said.