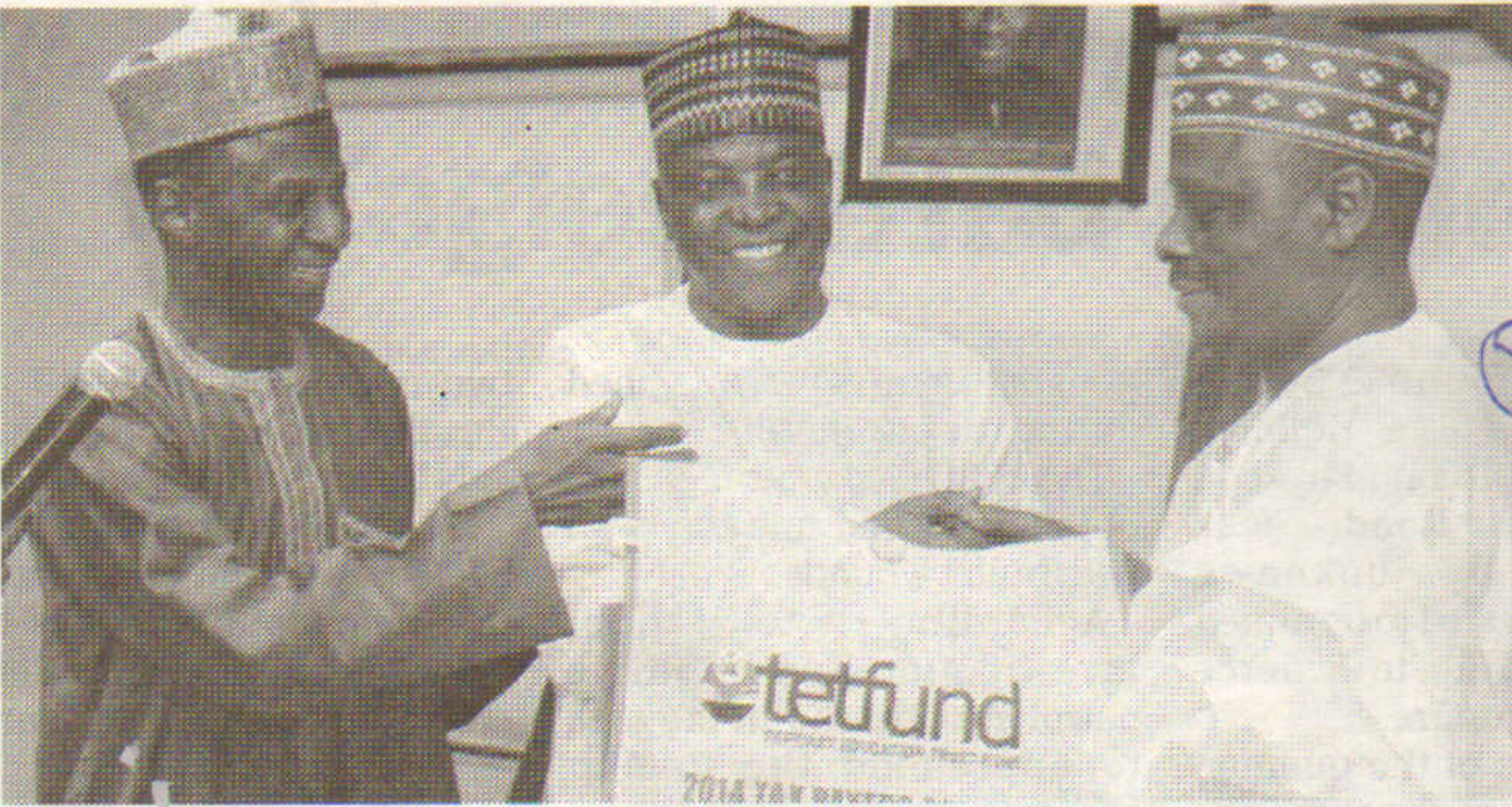


News



VISIT—From left: Executive Secretary, Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) Prof. Suleiman Bogoro; Chairman Board of Trustees, TETFUND, Dr. Musa Babayo and Kano State Governor, Alhaji Musa Kwankwaso during the governor's visit to the institution's corporate headquarters in Abuja. Photo: Gbemiga Olamikan.

ATTACKS ON TERRORISTS: Troops recapture Boko Haram training base

Continues from Page 1

pounded the Sambisa forest headquarters of the sect, killing 117 terrorists and arresting the Amir (Commander) of the sect. This came as Gwoza, which had become their new training base, was not spared.

The troops also recaptured Dikwa Local Government Area of Borno State.

Dikwa, headquarters of old Kanem-Bornu Empire, was taken over by Boko Haram some months ago, forcing the first class monarch, Alhaji Abba Tor Masta II, and thousands of his subjects to take refuge in Maiduguri.

It will be recalled that the premier Mobile Police Training base is located at Gwoza and when Boko Haram overran the base and abducted 30 police officers, who are missing till date, the terrorists allegedly converted the base to their training camp.

Confirming the development, Director of Defence Information, Major General Chris Olukolade said: "A concerted air campaign by the Nigerian Air Force is

ongoing in furtherance of the mission to clear terrorists from all their enclaves.

"The air strikes which today targeted the training camps and logistics dumps of the terrorists in Sambisa forest and parts of Gwoza have been highly successful as it achieved the aims with required precision.

"The death of a large number of terrorists has been recorded while many others are also scampering all over the forest and out of the struck bases.

"Meanwhile, the strikes continue in other locations of the theatre heralding the advance of troops and other elements of the mission."

Dikwa recaptured

The recapture of the town of Dikwa took place at about 7am, yesterday, after Chadian troops cleared Gamboru Ngala, Kala Balge and several villages off Boko Haram insurgents, and proceeded to storm Dikwa which is less than 100 kilometres north-east of Maiduguri.

A military source said

that the raid, which comprised military airstrikes backed up by ground troops, inflicted severe casualties on the terrorists which led to the recapture of the town now under control of the troops.

The source also revealed that during the encounter with the troops, two Chadian soldiers lost their lives, while the Amir (Commander) of the sect was arrested at the palace of the Shehu of Dikwa, which the troops suspected was turned to the base/headquarters of the insurgents.

"The terrorists had established themselves in Dikwa after taking over all the prominent buildings, including the Shehu's palace, local government secretariat as well as the official and private residences of prominent people," he said.

"Chadian soldiers took over Dikwa from Boko Haram after heavy fighting on Tuesday," Bababura Diwa, who lives in the town, said by telephone from Fotokol, across the border in northern Cameroon.

Diwa said the Chadians came from Gamboru, which they previously recaptured, with heavy artillery power and overpowered a group of militants at Lomani village, 15 kilometres from Dikwa.

"When they came into Dikwa, there was intense fighting but at last, they subdued the Boko Haram fighters. They killed many of them, including Abu Ashshe, their commander who was notorious for seizing cattle in the area.

"I used the opportunity provided by the presence of the Chadian troops to leave the town. I was afraid to leave when Boko Haram took over the town for fear of being branded a traitor and killed."

Diwa's account was

backed up by several other residents, who took advantage of the Chadian advance to flee the ancient town, which is near Boko Haram's makeshift camps in the Sambisa Forest.

Jidda Saleh, another resident, said Chadian troops launched heavy aerial and ground attacks on the Kala-Balge area, particularly on Nduwu village, which he said was a "major Boko Haram stronghold".

"The whole village was bombarded and it is obvious Boko Haram suffered heavy casualties from the aerial attack. Ground troops moved in later," he added.

"Meleri, which has a huge Boko Haram concentration, was also bombed by Chadian military jets and then taken over by ground troops. By the time we left, we learnt the Chadian soldiers were on their way to Kushimori village where Boko Haram keeps the livestock they seized from people.

"They have kept thousands of livestock there. They sank boreholes and recruited people to rear the animals for them."

Algoni Wal-Amire, another Kala-Balge resident, welcomed the offensive.

"Living under Boko Haram was like living in a minefield. You are always afraid your next step could be your last. I thank God I'm now safe from them," he said.

We'll rout out terrorists in the North East

—Jonathan

Meanwhile, President Goodluck Jonathan, yesterday, assured Nigerians that the general elections would be conducted as scheduled by the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, expressing optimism that the security challenges in the North eastern part of the country which was attributed as cause of the initial postponement of the election date, was being addressed.

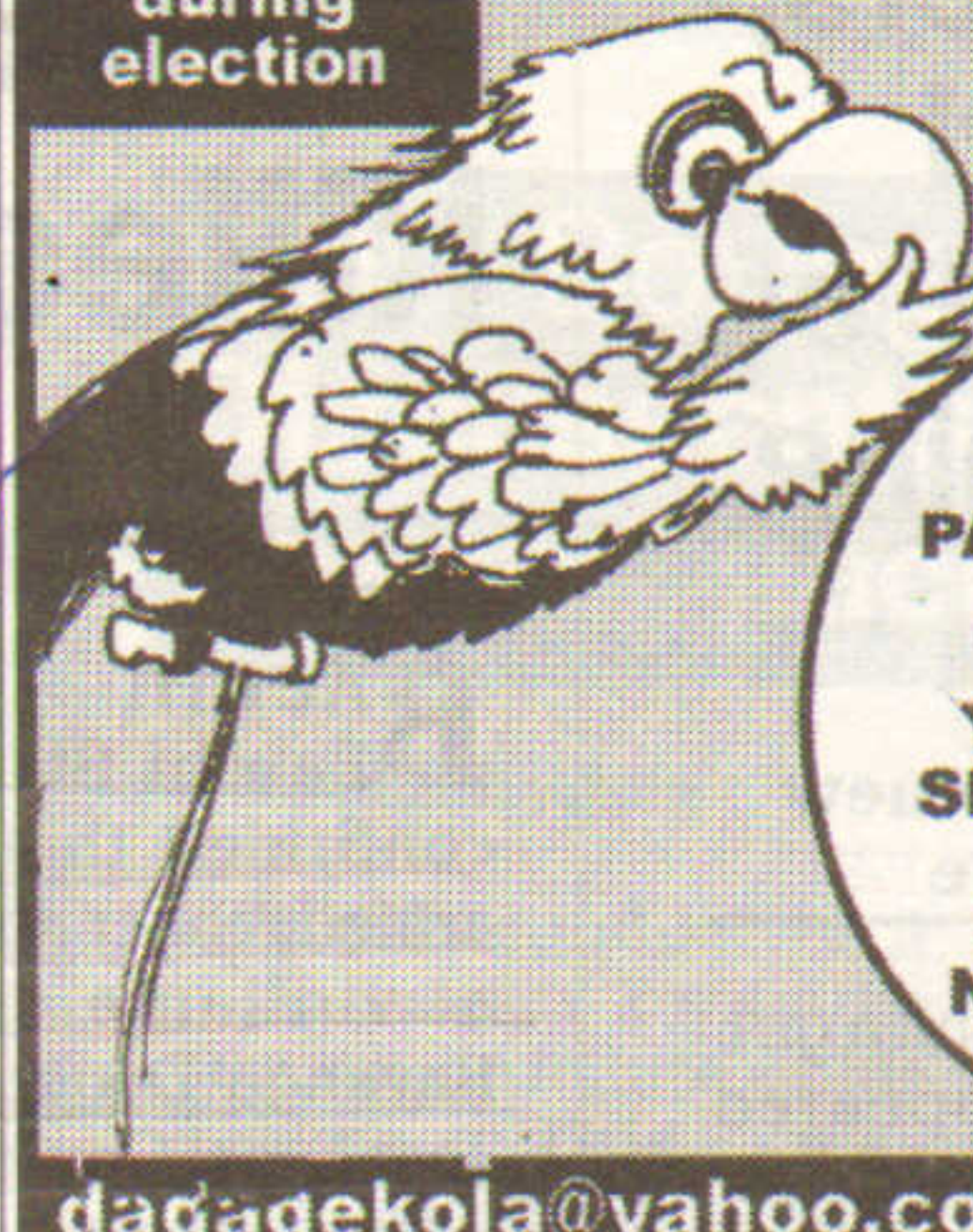
Speaking at the commissioning ceremony of four newly acquired warships by the Nigerian Navy, a landmark achievement in the last 32 years, President Jonathan stated that efforts were in top gear to return the north eastern part of the country to a level where insurgents would not affect the coming election.

Part of his administration's effort to address activities of terrorists in the North east, he said, was the procurement of technical capacity to the Armed Forces, an effort he

POCKET CARTOON

INEC, NYSC to protect corps members during election

Parrot & The patriot



MY CHILD IS NOT PARTICIPATING IN THE NATIONAL YOUTH CORP SERVICE UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTIONS! NO APOLOGY!

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boasted was capable of routing Boko Haram.

According to him: "I want to use this platform to promise my good country men and women that we will rout Boko Haram. Our capacity has increased sufficiently and our officers and men are doing wonderfully well in the north. They are working hard day and night and I have directed that Nigerians should be briefed regularly. We have improved the technical capacity of our men; both the Army, Navy and Air Force and we are pleased with what is happening.

"And we must conduct our election as scheduled by INEC because within this period, we are convinced that we will return the north to a level where activities of extremists will not affect our election", he stated.

He scored the Nigerian Navy high in the fight against maritime illegalities, disclosing that the volume of stolen crude oil in the nation's water had drastically reduced compared to what obtained but, however, lamented that the only area of challenge was vandalism of gas pipelines in the swamps.

Nigeria cannot be defined by Boko Haram

President Jonathan also stated that Nigeria cannot be defined by the activities of Boko Haram. He spoke, yesterday evening, when he met with the Yoruba Elders Forum.

According to Jonathan, politicians must put the country's unity and stability ahead of their political ambitions.

"No matter what we want to do, that is those of us who are aspiring to run this country or even at the state level, first and foremost you must have a country.

"If we don't have a country there will be no office to hold; whether it is the office of the President or office of the Vice President or office of the minister or whatever office, there must be Nigeria first."

"My position is that let us all collectively defend

and protect this country and that is why I always feel bad when people make statements that expose Nigeria as if it is the worst country on earth. We are not that bad.

"Yes, we have issues in this country. Even issues of security, like this Boko Haram, because we are managing a very delicate situation. Sometimes people define Nigeria by the Boko Haram. Nigeria cannot be defined based on Boko Haram alone. There is terror all over the world.

"My belief is that in the next three weeks or so if we don't completely take over all our territories, we would have handled the Boko Haram to the extent that it will no longer be a problem to the elections that will come up."

Earlier, the President of YCE, Gen. Adeyinka Adebayo (Ret) commended the President for the quality of leadership he is providing for the country.

8,700 joint task-force against Boko Haram

In a related development, the Niger Republic Military said, yesterday, that military chiefs from Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Benin and Niger would meet in N'Djamena next week to finalise strategy for the 8,700 task-force against Boko Haram.

The Director of Documentation and Military Intelligence of Niger's Armed Forces, Col. Mahamane Sani, said in N'djamena that all the efforts were aimed at fighting the insurgency to a standstill, reports Reuters.

Sani said the forces are seeking to pin down Boko Haram within Nigeria's borders ahead of a ground-and-air offensive by a regional task-force due to start from the end of next month.

"All we are doing right now is stopping Boko Haram from entering Niger. If they attack our positions we push them back a certain distance and Nigeria pushes from the other side to contain the situation," he said.

TAKE HEART

BY ELLA RANDLE

They cannot take away our self-respect if we do not give it to them—Mahatma Gandhi

EVERY choice you make, including the thoughts you think, has consequences. When you choose the behavior or thought, you choose the consequences. If you choose to stay in an abusive relationship, then you choose the consequences of pain and suffering. There will be times in your life when you have to choose between being loved and being respected.

The obvious choice is being respected because love without respect is always fleeting. But respect could grow into real lasting love. If you choose thoughts contaminated with anger and bitterness, then you will create an experience of alienation and hostility.

When you start choosing the right behavior and thoughts, which will take a lot of discipline on your part, you'll get the right consequences and attract the right persons and experiences.