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Military, B'Haram battle for CDS' town

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ABUJA—The military, yesterday, engaged the Boko Haram terrorists in a fierce battle at Vimtim, the home town of the Chief of Defence Staff, Air Chief Marshal Alex Badeh, inflicting heavy casualties on the insurgents. At the end of the gun battle, the troops who moved in from the 1 Division Kaduna, 3 Division Jos and TRADOC, Minna killed 40 sect members and also succeeded in reclaiming Michika, Uba and Gulak towns from the terrorists.

Giving details of what transpired, the source said, the terrorists encircled the troops from all angles of Vimtim as the troops concentrated in the city centre and a gun battle ensued. Unknown to them, the newly deployed soldiers arrived and joined the battle, taking on the terrorists from behind leading to killing of over 40 insurgents while others fled.

The military also recovered 17 Hilux vehicles, General Purpose Machine Guns (GPMGs) mounted on their Hilux vehicles, and several Anti-Aircraft guns (AA weapons). Several surface-to-air missiles were destroyed while four were taken away by the troops.

The military source added that the initial retreat by soldiers from Mubi was to enable soldiers re-strategize and attack the insurgents in full force, adding that this was what made civilians panic.

The situation, however, changed dramatically when troops from the other three states arrived and assisted in cutting the insurgents off in the confrontation that ensued.

3 Army officers, 2 soldiers injured —Defence Hq

The Defence headquarters has also confirmed that three officers and two soldiers were injured in the bloody encounter. In separate tweets posted, yesterday, it said the injured officers and soldiers were currently receiving treatment at a military facility.

Vanguard gathered that the General Officer Commanding the 3rd Armoured Division of the Nigerian Army, Major General Mohammed Zaruwa was personally directing the counter-insurgency operation.

The tweets read: "Counter Terrorist Troops have carried out an attack on insurgents in Mubi town, Adamawa State. In the

fierce battle to root out the insurgents, scores of insurgents lost their lives, while several others escaped with fatal gunshot wounds.

“Two officers and three soldiers who were wounded in the battle are currently receiving treatment in a Military Medical Facility”.

FG refocuses on Boko Haram's source of funding, weapons

Meanwhile, the Federal Government, said yesterday, that it would focus on the source of funding and weapons used by the insurgents, as part of efforts to end terrorism in the country.

The Coordinator, National Information Centre and Director-General, National Orientation Agency, Mr. Mike Omeri, who stated this during the routine security briefing, in Abuja, insisted that it had capacity to counter the ongoing insurgency in the North-Eastern part of the country.

Omeri said the recent Regional Ministerial Meeting convened to explore ways of achieving international cooperation in tackling the challenge of insurgency in the North East had called for more action in tackling the menace.

According to him, the meeting was summoned to look into the level of implementation of the decisions and commitments made at the Paris Summit of May 2014 and the follow-up meetings in London and Washington DC.

“Particularly, the meeting underscored the need to effectively address the sources of funding and supply of weapons to Boko Haram and called for greater international co-operation in tackling all forms of illegal transfer of arms and ammunition,” he said.

Omeri added that the forum also advocated strict sanctions against terrorist groups, especially Boko Haram, while commending the effort of the Nigerian government in setting up the Victims Support Fund for alleviating the plight of victims of insurgency.

He noted that the recent recapture of Bama town by the troops attest to the renewed zeal and commitment, which officers and men of the Nigerian Army had shown towards defending the country and her territorial integrity.

The NOA Boss commended the efforts of the Nigerian military in containing the activities of Boko Haram insurgents, urging the people to always pray for them.

Speaking further, Omeri warned Nigerians against purchasing used and pre-registered SIM cards from uncertain sources, saying such phones and SIM cards might have been used by terrorists for criminal activities.

“The caution has becomes necessary to save members of the public the embarrassment of being apprehended for crimes committed with phones and SIM cards found in their possession,” he said.

We are in control of Bama, Michika, Mubi —Boko Haram

Boko Haram on its part declared, yesterday, it was still in control of Bama, Michika and Mubi towns. Its spokesman, Abu Zinnira, in a statement said: “This is a rebuttal from the information dissemination and sensitization unit of the Jamaatul

Ahlil Sunna Lidawati Wal Jihad (Boko Haram) on the series of lies that the Nigerian military have been feeding the world on our recent conquests.

“Let the whole world know that we are on the path of victory because up to this minute, the town of Bama is under our control, the whole of Michika is now in our hands, as well as Mararaban (Junction of) Mubi now fully under our control. We are assuring the world that this would be continuous and there will be no going back by God’s grace. This is a message from me on behalf of our brethren.”

As thousands of displaced persons continue to troop into Yola, the Adamawa State capital from the Northern Senatorial district following fierce fighting with the insurgents, the hometown of the Chief of Defence Staff, Air Chief Marshall Alex Badeh is said to be close to the reach of the insurgents.

Vimtim, Badeh’s hometown is about 30 minutes drive from Mubi along the highways on the Yola–Maiduguri road.

Attempts by the insurgents to overrun the CDS’ hometown came few hours after the insurgents shot and wounded the son of a former Nigerian president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo at Bazza, the hometown of the General Officer commanding, GOC 3rd Division of the Nigerian Army, Jos, Major General J.S. Zaruma.

Emir of Mubi flees; LG chairmen desert councils

The fighting has forced the paramount Ruler of Mubi, Emir Abubakar Isah Ahmadu, the Vice President of Adamawa Council of Chiefs and Emirs to sneak out of the town.

Attempts to speak to the chairmen of Mubi North, Michika and Madagali local government councils proved abortive as they were reported to have deserted their council areas and relocated to Yola, the state capital.

The siege on Gulak, Michika, Bazza and its environs had affected commercial activities with reports saying that several people crossed over to the neighboring Cameroon.

“We couldn’t sleep due to the heavy gun shots that pervaded the air in the night and for now no one could say the exact situation. They kept shouting, chanting Allahu Akbar, people are now living in an atmosphere of despair and agony, even our Emir, His Royal Highness has left in the night,” said a resident that pleaded anonymity.

Also a palace source had confided that the emir was escorted out by security operatives following reports that the insurgents were advancing towards Mubi, already jam-packed by displaced persons.

“His Highness had earlier declined to leave the town, but security personnel mounted pressure on him, hence the reasons for the paramount ruler to travel out,” said the source.

A fleeing resident taking refugee on the hills disclosed in a telephone interview, that many residents were trapped in Michika, Bazza and Shuwa.

“We are in trouble now, many are trapped, some could not get out of their homes, these people were everywhere hoisting their flags on bikes, others brandishing their guns,” said another fleeing resident.

I’m eager to return to the battle Front, Col. Obasanjo tells Atiku

Son of former President Olusegun Obasanjo, Lt Col Adeboye Obasanjo, an army engineer at the 3rd Division in Jos, Plateau State, who was on Monday wounded by Boko Haram terrorists in the ferocious Michika battle between the Nigerian military and Boko Haram, said yesterday that he was eager to return to the battle front.

The injured son of former President Obasanjo, who led soldiers on an offensive to reclaim Michika town in Adamawa State but fell into the hands of the insurgents, disclosed that his mind was at the battle field. He spoke when former Vice President Atiku Abubakar visited him at a government medical facility in Yola, Adamawa State, yesterday, where he was said to be recuperating.

Atiku, who was in Yola over the weekend to vote in the APC gubernatorial primaries and to collect his permanent voters' card, on learning that Lt. Colonel Obasanjo was being treated at a government medical facility in Yola went to visit him yesterday afternoon.

According to a source at the hospital, Atiku was happy to find Lt. Col. Obasanjo in high spirits. According to the source, the former Vice President, who recently settled his differences with his former boss was impressed to learn from the injured officer his readiness to return to the battle front to deal with the insurgents.

The source quoted Atiku to have told Lt. Col Obasanjo that he was impressed to see him display the type of courage associated with his former boss, President Obasanjo.

The chieftain of the All Progressives Congress, APC was said to have wished Lt. Col Adeboye Obasanjo speedy recovery from the injuries he sustained from gunshots.

The source quoted Atiku as saying: "He was even marching before me as he was recovering from gunshots."

....He is in stable condition – Hospital

Meanwhile, the Chief Information Officer of Federal Medical Centre (FMC, Yola), Mr Adamu Dodo has confirmed that, "Obasanjo's son is recuperating after minor surgery and he is in stable condition in the hospital."

The State Acting Governor, Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri had earlier visited him and lauded all officers of the Nigerian Army who are battling to curtail the activities of insurgents in Adamawa Northern Senatorial Zone.

The governor said the people were proud of the soldiers who have lost their lives while defending their fatherland.

A senior military source told correspondents that troops today retook Bazza after a fierce battle in which soldiers killed several Boko Haram militants.

According to our source, "our soldiers circled Baza and engaged the terrorists in a serious battle. We have now recaptured Bazza after defeating the resistance of Boko Haram militants in the township."

Thousands of residents of Gulak, Michika and Bazza had fled to neighboring towns and Cameroon as Boko Haram had unleashed mayhem on residents during their short reign over the towns.

Sources disclosed that successful attacks on Boko Haram insurgents was made possible by an advance team of Nigerian

Air Force pilots who bombed the insurgents' command centres in Bazza.

“It was after our Air Force jets bombarded their strongholds mounted on roads that the troops moved in on a clearing mission,” the officer revealed.

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