

## ISWAP leader, Al-Barnawi is dead — IRABOR

**T**HE Chief of Defence Staff, CDS, General Lucky Irabor, has said Abu Musab Al-Barnawi, a leader of the Islamic State in West Africa Province, ISWAP, is dead.

He was the eldest surviving son of the founder of Boko Haram, Mohammed Yusuf.

Irabor spoke yesterday while fielding questions from journalists at the state house, saying: "I can authoritatively confirm to you that Al-Barnawi is dead. He is dead, and he remains dead."

Recall that earlier in the year, Abubakar Shekau, Boko Haram leader, was reportedly killed by ISWAP fighters in a gun battle.

Both factions have been at war since 2016 when ISWAP broke out of the Shekau-led group over leadership issues.

Al-Barnawi, the then leader of ISWAP, had said Shekau's faction would be defeated by the Nigerian military.

The crisis between the factions had broken out in Sunawa, a town on the Nigeria-Niger border, where many of the fighters killed each other.

When asked when military operations would end in the north-east, Irabor said the army was still assessing the situation, and could not say when the operations would be concluded.

He said: "There are benchmarks but it's not for me at this forum to give you a terminal date. You do also know as we move in the upward trend in the state of peace, then of course, that should give you an indication that at some point, we are going to have a review of the setting and whether there is going to be a scaling down of military actions.

"But under the current setting, we have not made such a plan, and we have not assessed that time has come for us to undertake that kind of assessment."