

NAF Air strikes kill ISWAP Commanders, Ali Kwaya, Bukar Mainoka, others

By Kingsley Omonobi

1 **ABUJA**—THE Nigerian Airforce has killed two high profile ISWAP Commanders and several of the fighters on the fringes of Lake Chad.

Military sources disclosed that the development took place when the air component of Operation Hadin Kai conducted an air interdiction mission at Belowa weekend.

Belowa is among the very few remaining ISWAP/Boko Haram enclaves in the Tumbuns, Lake Chad Region in Abadam Local Government Area.

It was gathered that the strikes became necessary after intelligence revealed convergence of some ISWAP leaders and fighters from surrounding areas for a meeting with the motive of planning attacks on friendly forces.

Accordingly, a mix of Nigerian Air Force aircraft was dispatched to the location of the meeting at Belowa which was confirmed to be active.

The location was subsequently engaged with rockets and bombs in multiple passes.

2 An hour after the strikes, two vehicles conveying about 13 injured surviving terrorists to another hideout were struck through precision strikes by NAF aircraft.

Feedback after the strikes revealed that ISWAP kingpin, Mallam Ali Kwaya, who is a key member of ISWAP Shura Council, and Mallam Bukar Mainoka were among those neutralized in the strikes.

Similar strikes were also conducted on November 4, 2022, at Ngwun Gana in Bama LGA, a location east of Maiduguri.

The strikes became expedient sequel to intelligence that a group of ISWAP insurgents in 15 trucks were spotted converging on the location.

The insurgents, who were armed with assorted weapons, were believed to have arrived from Mina, Abuja Kote and Tanga Lan Nga villages, all in Bama LGA.

Usually, such regrouping means that an attack on troop's locations in Bama LGA was in the offing. The need to strike the location was thus authorized.

Feedback revealed the strike was on point as several terrorists were neutralized and all their structures and vehicles engulfed in fire.

Recent behaviours of remnants of terrorists and insurgents' elements, particularly in the Northeast, are indication of a state of desperation, confusion, apprehension and anxiety.

On one hand, their ability to loiter freely and attack vulnerable

villages and troops' location at will has drastically reduced, just as their sources of weapon supplies have been blocked.

The infighting among the terrorist groups is also viewed as a clear sign of an end in sight of the groups acting and working together to attack troop's location.

When contacted, Air Commodore Edward Gabkwet, NAF spokesperson, confirmed the strikes but refused to be drawn into the names of those killed.

He said: "Our path to victory in the northeast and northwest remains on course and we won't

relent until all locations are free of terrorists and insurgents.

"Let's also not forget that the resilience of our pilots and technicians is in line with the directive of the Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal Amao, that terrorists and insurgents must be denied their hiding places."

Roles of editors, security agencies in 2023 elections headline Editors Conference In Owerri

•Osinbajo, Uzodinma, Monguno, Yakubu, Nwodo, Abati lead conversations •Imo govt, CBN, NNPC, UBA, Air Peace, Access Bank, boost summit

ALL IS now set for the 18th All Nigeria Editors Conference, starting on Thursday with Vice-President Yemi Osinbajo expected to declare it open.

The National Security Adviser, NSA, Gen. Babagana Monguno, retd, former Minister of Information and Culture, Chief Nnia John Nwodo, and Chairman, the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, Prof Mahmood Yakubu, will lead the discussions at the three-day conference holding in Owerri, the Imo State capital.

The conference, is being supported by Imo State government and some corporate organisations, including Nigeria National Petroleum Company Limited, NNPC, Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN, United Bank for Africa, UBA, Glo, Zenith Bank, Access Bank, Air Peace and Nigeria Deposit Insurance Company, NDIC.

Others are Nigeria Port Authority, NPA, and Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency, NIMASA, among others.

In a statement issued yesterday by the President, Mustapha Isah and the General Secretary, Iyobosa Uwugiaren, the Nigerian

Guild of Editors, NGE, said the governor of Imo State, Senator Hope Uzodinma, would be the guest of honour, while former Special Adviser (Media and Publicity) to the President of Nigeria, Dr. Reuben Abati, would deliver the keynote address, with the theme, "2023: Political Landscape, Credible Elections And The Role of Editors."

The first woman professor of Mass Communication in Africa and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Paul University, Awka, Prof Stella Chinyere Okunna, will chair the opening ceremony.

Besides the opening session, the conference would have three others; the second session for the Day 1 of the conference has a paper titled, Mobilizing Citizens for Sustainable Democracy In Nigeria, to be presented by by Former Minister of Information & Culture, Chief Nwodo.

The morning session of the Day 2, Friday, November 11, would have the National Security Adviser, Gen. Monguno presenting a paper, 2023 General Election And Security: What Editors Need To Know", the statement added.

The statement said that the afternoon second session with the theme, "Preparation For 2023

General Election: How Far, How Well", will be delivered by the INEC Chairman, Prof Yakubu. While the third session (Executive Session) will feature invited state governors, the Group Chief Executive Officer of Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited, Mele Kolo Kyari and other chief executive officers from both private and public sectors.

According to the statement, "the conference will be rounded off on Saturday evening with a gala night evening where new Fellows and members of the Guild, will be inducted" the statement said.

"Over 400 editors and media owners - from print, broadcast stations and online newspapers have registered for this year conference."

Meanwhile, the Imo State Government has assured the editors that they would have a great conference in Owerri.

According to the Commissioner of Information, Hon. Declan Mbadiwe, "We know that the editors will have a good conference. Our state is hospitable and a good location for conferences. That's why we have hosted many conferences this year. The editors are welcome to the Eastern Heartland."

2023: We'll ensure Peter Mbah's victory as Enugu's next governor —Ndi Oganiru Enugu

ENUGU—THOUSANDS of members of Ndi Oganiru Enugu, a formidable and popular support group founded by influential people from all walks of life for the Senator representing Enugu West senatorial zone at the National Assembly, Senator Ike Ekweremadu, have thrown their weight behind the governorship candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, in Enugu State, Dr. Peter Mbah, saying they would ensure his electoral victory in the forthcoming 2023 general elections.

The group which disclosed this in Enugu on Saturday at a well-attended reception organised in honour of Dr. Mbah, said the endorsement became necessary

because the gubernatorial flagbearer had shown his potent and robust manifesto, stressing that they were enthralled by his pledge to ramp up Enugu State's gross domestic product (GDP) from its present \$4 billion to \$30 billion within four to eight years of his administration.

Formally collapsing their structure to Peter Mbah and PDP Campaign Organisation, the President, Ndi Oganiru Enugu, Engr. Jude Asogwa, who spoke for the group, said that the body has a strong presence in the 260 wards of Enugu State, 36 states of the federation and 16 countries of the world which would be mobilized for the PDP.

Asogwa who further insisted that

the primary election was over, maintained that their endorsement was also in fulfilment of Senator Ekweremadu's promise to support Mbah's candidacy immediately after the May 25, 2022 PDP primary.

"The primary election has come and gone. Things did not go Ikeoha's way. But being a party man, who is never desperate about life, after consultations with his political associates and the leaderships of his support groups, he personally issued a statement entitled "Ndi Enugu, Time to Unite" where he congratulated Dr. Peter Mbah. Ikeoha Global also went on to say that his political structures would be merged with that of Dr. Peter Mbah to ensure that he is delivered as the next governor of Enugu State.