

ISWAP beheads 21 herdsman in Borno for ignoring ban on cattle rearing, others

• As Air strikes kill terrorists' kingpin, Alhaji Nashama, several others
• Destroy terrorists, bandits' enclaves in Zamfara, Niger, Borno • How fear of joint Army, Airforce search teams made kidnappers abandon me, others —Victim

By Kingsley Omonobi

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ABUJA—THE Islamic State of the West African Province, ISWAP, fighters have beheaded no fewer than 21 herdsman in separate attacks in Borno State for ignoring the warning of the terrorists group on cattle rearing, farming and fishing.

This came as the air component of Operation Hadarin Daji, OPHD, in precision strikes, eliminated notorious terrorists kingpin, Alhaji Nashama, and several members loyal to him.

Sources said the terrorists who rode on 17 motorcycles, attacked and killed 14 herdsman in the axis of Kukawa in the evening of Tuesday, July 25, 2023, after accusing them of trespassing.

A counter-insurgency expert and security analyst in the Lake Chad region, Zagazola Makama, who confirmed the attack, said the terrorists didn't fire any shots from their rifles but deployed machetes to behead many of the herdsman.

He said after killing the herdsman and stealing their livestock, the insurgents moved towards the axis of Kukawa, Doro and Kalla, areas suspected to be occupied by a large number of the terrorists.

According to him, on July 25, at about 2300hours, the terrorists in about seven gun trucks intercepted another group of Fulani herdsman in the axis of Kukawa and killed six additional persons after warning them not to ever come to the area.

He said some of the remaining victims who fled the scene were able to recover four bodies in the aftermath of the attacks, leaving several bodies in the bushes.

Makama explained that on Monday, July 24, 2023, ISWAP terrorists had abducted about seven Fulani herdsman in Monguno after sneaking to the town through the axis of Ajilani Charly 7.

This was as another unspecified number of the Fulani men were abducted by the terrorists at Garere village in Gudumbali local government area of Borno State where they demanded for N40 million ransom.

ISWAP leadership had recently placed a ban on fishing, farming and cattle rearing within some of its hideouts, after accusing the people of spying on them for the military.

Sources said the week-long onslaught against the herdsman has forced them to flee from Lake

Chad to safer locations in the axis of Cameroon, Niger and Chad.

Air strikes kill terrorists' kingpin, Alhaji Nashama, several others

Meanwhile, the air component of Operation Hadarin Daji, OPHD, has in precision strikes, killed several terrorists loyal to the notorious terrorists' kingpin, Alhaji Nashama.

NAF aircraft carried out the aerial bombardments at Alhaji Nashama's enclave in Birnin Magaji Local Government Area (LGA) of Zamfara State, killing scores of fighters of the wanted terrorists' kingpin.

Sources said the strikes came on the heels of credible and actionable intelligence that terrorists were congregating at Tsamre in Birnin Magaji LGA with the aim of attacking locals and rustling their cattle.

Accordingly, the Air Component of OPHD struck the location in successive passes, eliminating scores of terrorists, as well as destroying their structures and enclaves," a source said.

Another source said similar airstrikes were also conducted on terrorists' enclaves at Hanawanka in Shiroso LGA and Palele, a village on the borders of Shiroso and Munya LGAs of Niger State.

This became necessary after intelligence had revealed a migration of terrorists from Katsina and Zamfara states who had come under intense heat from military onslaughts.

In the Northeast, air strikes were also conducted by the air component of Operation Hadin Kai on July 25, 2023, at a terrorists' hideout located about 1.5Km East of Ara in Bama Local Government Area of Borno State.

"Ara was once a well-known terrorists' hideout near Sambisa Forest that was cleared of terrorists by the land component of Operation Hadin Kai.

"The intelligence-driven strikes followed days and weeks of careful observation of the location which had revealed suspected terrorists armed with various firearms who used the covers of trees and other vegetation to hide their motorcycles and trucks to evade detection.

"The aftermath of the air strikes revealed several terrorists neutralized and their weapons,

equipment and structures destroyed.

Airstrikes by air components of the various joint operating theatres have recently been ramped up to deny terrorists, militants and other criminal elements freedom of action.

The directive to all component commanders is to ensure they keep these terrorists on their toes and ensure they and their supporters are on the run until they surrender," said the source.

The Chief of the Air Staff, Air Vice Marshal Hasan Abubakar, expressed delight with the heightened level of morale and commitment among NAF pilots and other support staff, while also encouraging them to maintain the momentum.

How fear of joint Army, Airforce teams made kidnappers abandon me, others —Victim

In another development, a rescued victim of kidnapping, Emmanuel Goli, explained how their captors abandoned them, following hot pursuit by a joint team of Army and Nigerian Airforce personnel, after they were killed near a village called Andaha on their way from Jos to Abuja on January 23, 2023.

Narrating her ordeal, she said after attending the wedding ceremony of a family member in Jos, she was traveling from Jos to Abuja in a private car with four other occupants, including two co-travelers she was acquainted with and two others military officers when they were kidnapped.

She said on approaching Andaha village, they heard gunshots ahead at a location that was mainly surrounded by forests and sparsely inhabited with rural scattered farms.

She said they sighted the kidnappers who blocked the road and that sensing danger, as the kidnappers were firing into the air, the driver of their car abruptly came to a stop and tried to reverse but that in the process, the car skidded into the forest.

She explained further that they all ran out of the car, with three of them running in the same direction, while two others ran in another direction.

"As we ran, we heard screams and gunshots behind us. The three of us that ran in the same direction were caught by the

kidnappers, while our colleagues managed to escape.

The gunmen that kidnapped us spoke in Hausa. The kidnappers held us and five other people at gunpoint as their other colleagues joined them. They were eight in number, four with guns, while others had long cutlasses.

"I was the only female among those kidnapped. After walking a long distance into the forest while it was raining, and pitch dark, the kidnappers stopped at some point, when they felt they could not easily be traced, then proceeded to ask us to disclose our tribes, occupations, and our fathers' occupations.

"I told them that I was a primary school assistant teacher with a meagre salary and that my biological father was also a retired teacher, whose pension was too small to take care of his needs.

They further inquired if I had money to pay to free myself. I replied in the negative, saying I could raise N500,000 only.

NBA berates DSS, NPS for engaging in fisticuffs over Emefiele

By Ikechukwu Nnochiri

ABUJA—THE Nigerian Bar Association, NBA, yesterday berated the Department of State Services, DSS, and officers of the Nigerian Prisons Service, NPS, for engaging in a free-for-all within the premises of the Federal High Court in Lagos, following the arraignment of suspended governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN, Mr Godwin Emefiele.

It will be recalled that operatives of the DSS had in a bid to retain the embattled ex-governor of the apex bank in their custody, manhandled a senior prison official.

Trial Justice Nicolas Oweibo had after Emefiele pleaded not guilty to a two-count charge of illegal possession of firearms and ammunition that the Federal Government preferred against him, granted him bail to the tune of N20million with one surety in the like sum.

The court, thereafter, ordered that the defendant be remanded in prison custody, pending the perfection of his bail conditions.

However, shortly after the court proceedings ended, attempt

"They rejected the amount, demanding that they would only accept the sum of N100 million from each of us and that if I did not pay up, they would take me to their boss who was in Kaduna State and that he would marry me into his harem.

"I pleaded with them that I was already married and had a child but they told me I will be forcibly given in marriage to their boss unless I meet their demand.

"While the captors were taking us to a village in Kaduna State in the night, they noticed that some soldiers were patrolling and searching for us. Intermittently, they would hide and ask us (captives) to keep quiet and lay low.

"In the process of walking for an extended period without shoes, I had big blisters underneath my feet. I sprained my right ankle, stumbled and fell. I was in severe pain and started to lag behind the rest of the group because I couldn't walk fast anymore as it was also very dark and I couldn't see clearly.

"After a while, it seemed like they were confused and didn't know where they were going and because of the security patrol they were trying to avoid. They started to call their counterparts when the group was once more divided but I couldn't understand what they were saying because they

spoke in Hausa.

"As I could not walk fast, they threatened to kill me if I did not behave myself. Four of them assaulted me while I pleaded for mercy to no avail. They told me to stop pleading, otherwise, they would waste me and my family will not be able to find my remains.

"While they were trying to rough handle me, their leader ordered one of them to ask me to stand up and we started walking again for a long time. Then they stopped in their tracks after a lengthy call with their counterparts.

"They kept yelling at me to walk faster and suddenly, one of them came from behind and hit me with a rifle on my ankle. At that point, I could not walk any longer and started to cry.

"When I noticed they were way ahead, I changed direction, struggled to walk back towards the main road with the help of intermittent lights of vehicles and vehicular sounds until I passed out by the roadside.

"I woke up in the Nigerian Air Force Base Hospital in Jos where I was recovered by good Samaritans traveling to the city who said they saw me laying by the side of the road at about 4 am on July 24, 2023. That was all I could recount.

"Luckily, as at the evening of Monday, 24th July 2023, each of the captors managed to escape from the kidnappers as a combined team of NAF and NA troops intensified patrol into the bushes and adjoining forests."

government are gauged in assessing the rule of law."

The NBA President maintained that the incident was a further evidence of the lack of discipline and absence of professionalism that continues to plague key security institutions in Nigeria which, without doubt, is largely responsible for the limited progress in achieving a coordinated response to security concerns across the country.

He said: "A situation where officers of Federal Government agencies engage in a light as witnessed by the public, for whatever reason, is antithetical to our security as a nation and creates a recipe for anarchy and chaos.

Both the DSS and the NPS are important institutions dealing with national security and administration of justice respectively, and the need for them to work in concert towards attaining justice in a secured Nigeria cannot be overemphasised.

"While it is difficult not to hold the leadership of the two federal government agencies directly responsible for the shameful and disgraceful conduct of the personnel, the NBA President has particularly called on the two agencies to take immediate disciplinary measures against the officers involved in this disgraceful conduct."