

ISIS 2nd Global Leader Killed In Nigeria/US Collaboration



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The troops of the Nigerian Military deployed to the North-East, Operation Hadin Kai (OPHK), in collaboration with the United State of American (US) military have eliminated the dreaded ISIS global Second in Command, Abu Bilal Al-Minuki, alongside several key lieutenants and fighters in Metele, Borno State.

The major incident which occurred Friday night was reported on the social media handle of the American President Donald Trump and his Nigerian counterpart, President Bola Tinubu. President Trump, in the announcement on Friday night on his social media platform, Truth Social, commended the Nigerian government for partnering the US on the daring mission.

He said: "Tonight, at my direction, brave American forces and the Armed Forces of Nigeria flawlessly executed a meticulously planned and very complex mission to eliminate the most active terrorist in the world from the battlefield.



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"Abu-Bilal al-Minuki, second in command of ISIS globally, thought he could hide in Africa, but little did he know we had sources who kept us informed on what he was doing," Similarly, President Tinubu in a tweet on his official Xhandle on Saturday wrote: "Overnight, Nigeria and the United States recorded a significant example of effective collaboration in the fight against terrorism.

"Our determined Nigerian Armed Forces, working closely with the Armed Forces of the United States, conducted a daring joint operation that dealt a heavy blow to the ranks of the Islamic State. "Early assessments confirm the elimination of the wanted IS senior leader,

Abu-Bilal AlManuki, also known as AbuMainok, along with several of his lieutenants, during a strike on his compound in the Lake Chad Basin "Nigeria appreciates this partnership with the United States in advancing our shared security objectives. I extend my sincere gratitude to President Trump for his leadership and unwavering support in this effort.

"I commend the personnel involved on both sides for their professionalism and courage, and I look forward to more decisive strikes against all terrorist enclaves across the nation."

The Presidency also cleared the controversy on whether the ISWAP commander eliminated by the Nigerian-US military cooperation was really the dreaded Abu-Bilal Al-Manuki or not, insisting that there was no ambiguity in the claim. Presidential spokesman, Bayo Onanuga, in a release explained that the past claim of killing the fighter in Kaduna in 2024 was a case of mistaken identity.

Onanuga in a release on Saturday, wrote: "The needless controversy trailing the reported elimination of AbuBilal Al-Manuki—also known as Abu-Mainok or Abu-Bilal Al-Minuki, described as a senior commander of the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) has once again exposed the gulf between the public sceptics and the realities of modern counterterrorism operations.

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"Doubters of the latest Nigerian-American military successful operation in neutralising the ISWAP leader rushed to question the authenticity of the claim. However, security sources insist that such reactions are premature, unwarranted and not grounded in the full operational context.

"It is acknowledged within military and intelligence circles that Al-Manuki's name had appeared among lists of suspected ISWAP/Boko Haram commanders reportedly killed in 2024 during operations around the Birnin Gwari forest axis in Kaduna State.

"However, security officials now clarify that the earlier listing was a case of mistaken identity or misattribution in the fog of sustained counterinsurgency operations. Importantly, intelligence now confirms that the Birnin Gwari theatre was never within AlManuki's established operational sphere, which negates the accuracy of the earlier assessment.

"This time, however, security and military authorities maintain a far higher level of confidence. According to intelligence sources, the latest operation was the result of prolonged Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) efforts, supported by communications monitoring and phone intercepts that reportedly began as far back as December 2025.

"The intelligence trail, according to sources familiar with the mission, did not emerge overnight. Rather, it was built over months of persistent tracking, digital surveillance, and human intelligence inputs to map Al-Manuki's movements across key locations in northern Nigeria. "Security officials disclosed that efforts initially focused on capturing him alive rather than eliminating him.

This explains why he was reportedly under surveillance in multiple locations, including Abuja and Maiduguri, up to just days before the final operation. "The coordinated effort suggests that the target had been under sustained pressure, with intelligence units attempting to narrow his movements while avoiding premature exposure of the operation.

"Unlike the previous report, security authorities insist that the latest strike was executed with a significantly higher degree of precision, target validation, and multi-source intelligence confirmation.

"Officials maintain that multiple layers of verification were applied before authorisation of the final kinetic action, making this operation distinct from earlier incidents in which battlefield assessments later required revision. In their assessment, "this time, there is no ambiguity."

"Critics have pointed to past cases in global counterterrorism where high-value targets like Abubakar Shekau were wrongly declared killed, only to resurface later.

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However, security analysts caution against using such historical anomalies to dismiss every confirmed operation. "Indeed, modern counterterrorism history is replete with similar cases of initial uncertainty, particularly in complex environments where insurgent networks operate across difficult terrain and rely heavily on aliases, fragmented identities, and misinformation.

"For example, even in the global campaign against ISIS leadership, early reports of the death of Abu Bakr alBaghdadi were later proven incorrect, with his actual death confirmed four years after the first successful killing was announced.

"Such cases highlight not failure but rather the evolving, often imperfect nature of intelligence gathering in asymmetric warfare. "Undermining credible joint operations, particularly those involving Nigerian forces and international partners, risks weakening public confidence in ongoing counterterrorism efforts.