

Konduga. Many soldiers and Boko Haram fighters died. The army captured five Boko Haram suspects, one of whom they identified as the Boko Haram commander Abubakar Shekau.¹³¹ He, along with three of the other suspects, died in custody. Video footage of the interrogation and photos showing the corpse of the alleged Boko Haram commander were posted online.¹³²

After Abubakar Shekau appeared in a new video statement, it became clear that the dead captive was someone else.¹³³ A military source confirmed to Amnesty International that the person that had been killed was not Shekau.¹³⁴

A Civilian JTF member from Konduga who witnessed the arrest of these men told Amnesty International that after soldiers had interrogated the man thought to be Shekau, the Officer in Charge ordered the other soldiers to break his legs and take him to the soldiers' lodge. The witness claims that once the Officer in Charge left, the junior officers shot and killed four of the five suspects, including the alleged Boko Haram commander.¹³⁵ It is unclear what happened to the fifth man.

The witness told Amnesty International that the detainees posed no threat and were murdered by soldiers; the video evidence confirms his statement.¹³⁶

EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTION OF 15 MEN AND BOYS IN POTISKUM, 5 NOVEMBER 2014

On 5 November 2014, early in the morning, soldiers and Mobile Police (MOPOL) officers in two flatbed trucks drove to Dogo Tebo ward, in Potiskum, Yobe state.

Residents told Amnesty International that the soldiers and MOPOL officers went into several houses and brought out 16 men and boys, aged between 13 and 40, and drove them away. Abubakar Doho (not his real name) told Amnesty International that they were looking for a specific individual who was not at home, and that the men might have been arrested in his place.¹³⁷ He said the men were taken to a police station and 15 of them were then transferred to the military barracks in the Government Reserved Area (GRA) of Potiskum. Another eyewitness to the arrest, who lived in the same street as the men arrested, confirmed the arrest and said that later in the afternoon, the police returned to arrest him and three others; they were released later that evening.¹³⁸

Residents told Amnesty International that they heard gunshots at around 10pm in the evening. The next morning, Abubakar and other residents and relatives of the men went to

¹³¹ On 24 September Defence Headquarters tweeted "Mohammed Bashir who has been acting or posing on videos as the deceased Shekau, the eccentric character died." They also released a statement on 24 September confirming his death and showing pictures of the dead body: www.defenceinfor.mil.nig/current-developments-in-counter-terrorism-campaign/.

¹³² See www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGbC03UTGhw

¹³³ The Nigerian military in a statement released on 2 October, insisted that "the individual who was appearing in video and claiming to be the leader of the terrorist group was killed in the Konduga battle in September." See: defenceinfo.mil.ng/the-purported-shekau-video-in-circulation-2/

¹³⁴ Amnesty International interview, October 2014.

¹³⁵ Amnesty International interview, October 2014.

¹³⁶ Amnesty International interview, October 2014.

¹³⁷ Amnesty International interview, November 2014.

¹³⁸ Amnesty International interview, November 2014.

the mortuary in Potiskum General Hospital because they feared the men had been killed. They saw the dead bodies of 15 of the young men detained on 5 November.

Abubakar Doho described the corpses to Amnesty International: "I saw the 15 bodies. They shot them. Some in the head, some in the stomach and some in the chest. They beat them thoroughly and tied them with rope. The rope had been removed, but I saw the mark around the hands. There were bruises on most of the boys."¹³⁹ No autopsy was carried out and the relatives took the bodies with them for burial. A military source with knowledge of the operations in the north-east confirmed that the military had shot and killed the men.¹⁴⁰

EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTION OF UMAR ABDULLAHI, SEPTEMBER 2013

On the afternoon of 25 September 2013, about eight JTF soldiers from Potiskum conducted a house-to-house search operation in Yindiski Ward, Potiskum, Yobe state. The soldiers arrived in a Hilux vehicle and arrested 11 men between the ages of 25 and 55.

One of the men arrested, Mallam Abdullahi (not his real name), told Amnesty International that the soldiers executed his 29-year-old son Umar Abdullahi (not his real name) during the raid. Mallam said he did not know why his son was chosen and killed by the soldiers. He said the soldiers had come to his house and arrested the only men in the house; him and his son. He described how the soldiers shouted at them and pushed them into their vehicle. He saw other men in the vehicle: some of them had blood on their foreheads. He was able to identify two from the street where he lived. He said that they were sitting in the vehicle when one of the soldiers came and started asking questions.

He said: "He [the soldier] asked my son what he does for a living. My son told them he had just finished his college and was getting ready to marry and they should allow him to show them his certificates. One of the soldiers asked him to come out of the vehicle and go into the house to get his certificates. He came down from the vehicle and he was asked to walk back into the house, as soon as he turned his back to enter the house, I saw the soldier raised his gun and shot him in the back. He fell down on his face and there was blood everywhere. I could not believe what I saw. I lost all my senses.

My son was shot and killed right in front of my eyes. Right in front of my house. In the full view of his mothers, his sisters and cousins and the whole family. It was unbelievable. He was just 29 years old.... I would never wipe out that image from my mind. I can still see the bullet tearing the body of my child. I will never forgive those who did that to my family. The face of the soldier who killed my son is very clear to me."¹⁴¹

Mallam said the body was then left outside the compound of his house. Ten other men, including his neighbours and their relatives, were also arrested. The soldiers then drove away with all the people arrested. Mallam said he was later told that his son was buried by the neighbours. He spent one month in military detention and was released without further explanation.

¹³⁹ Amnesty International interview, November 2014.

¹⁴⁰ Amnesty International interview, November 2014.

¹⁴¹ Amnesty International interview, April 2013.