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Gangan Ruwa: Inside Kano community where Magajin Garin Daura was 'hidden'

By Yusha'u A. Ibrahim & Tijjani Ibrahim, Kano | Published Date Jul 7, 2019 3:30 AM



The house where the victim was held for six days

Residents of Gangan Ruwa quarters, located in Samegu, on the outskirts of Kumbotso Local Government Area of Kano State, had enjoyed uninterrupted peace until Monday, July 1, 2019, when hundreds of armed police in about 40 Hilux patrol vans stormed the area about 6pm for an operation to rescue the abducted Magajin Garin Daura, Alhaji Musa Umar Uba. The operation took place six days after he was brought to a three-bedroom apartment by his kidnappers. Gangan Ruwa is a relatively new settlement.

A security personnel who pleaded anonymity because he was not authorised to speak to the press said the heavily armed policemen cordoned off the house where the traditional ruler was kept.

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"Few minutes after the police took over the area, the leader of the kidnappers was arrested and asked to speak with his men to surrender themselves, through a public address system.

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“However, the criminals, who were inside the house, refused to surrender to the police. Their leader asked them to release his wife and daughter who were also inside the house. Again, the criminals refused; instead they opened fire into the air, with a view to scaring the police.

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“As a result of this, the police engaged them in exchange of fire, and in the process, one of the criminals was shot in the head and killed instantly. The man was shot dead while trying to escape by climbing the wall of the three-bedroom apartment. Two other criminals were arrested alive,” he said.

Another police source, who also craved anonymity, confided in Daily Trust on Sunday that 11 suspects were arrested in connection with the kidnap of Magajin Garin Daura and guns and ammunitions were recovered at the apartment where he was rescued.

He said the traditional leader was taken to five locations before he was finally brought to Gangan Ruwa, where he spent only six days before the police tracked the house and rescued him.

“He was first taken to Katsina after he was kidnapped from Daura, then moved to Yobe State, later to Jigawa, then Abuja, and finally to Kano. The man spent only six days in Kano before he was rescued by the police,” the police source said.

According to the policeman, the leader of the criminal gang was arrested while trying to buy a car in Kano. “We got a tip-off that the man was going to change his car; hence he had ordered for a car to be brought to him on Sunday. It was in the process of going to the car dealer that we were able to arrest him.

“The man boarded a tricycle from Gangan Ruwa to Kano city, but unknown to him, our men were trailing him. So, shortly after he left the area, our men communicated with their colleagues who were taking cover around the area he went to see the car, and we finally arrested him,” he said.

The operation, led by DCP Abba Kyari, the leader of Operation Puff Adder, an intelligent response team of the police, in collaboration with the Kano State command, was successful as the Magajin Garin Duara was rescued unhurt while one of the criminals was killed and two others arrested alive.

But after the police operation, the atmosphere in Gangan Ruwa became a combination of anxiety and curiosity. When our correspondents visited the area a day after the operation, residents were seen in groups commiserating with one another over what befell them, even as they waited for the outcome of the unfolding events.



Three bedroom apartment where Magajin Garin Daura was kept being demolished by officials of Kano State Urban Planning and Development Authority (KNUPDA)

It was observed that the area was relatively quiet as many men in the neighbouring buildings to the house where the Magajin was rescued had evacuated their wives and children due to the fear of what might happen after the operation.

A resident of the area, Malam Tijjani Yusuf, also told our correspondents that some of the housewives were hospitalised as a result of the trauma they went through due to the sound of gunshots between the kidnappers and the police during the rescue operation.

“We were really terrified. There were more than 40 police vehicles here. We have never seen something like this before. It was indeed a terrible experience. Most men decided to remain in their houses for fear of housebreakers, but women and children have been relocated to other places,” he said.

Another resident, Abubakar Hassan Abdullahi said, “Something has to be done about the agents that are renting out houses to people. I mean that landlords, agents and caretakers have to be cautioned to always be vigilant while renting houses to tenants. They must be willing to investigate deeply to know where the prospective tenants are coming from and why he left there. This is to avoid accommodating criminals.”

He added that he once vacated the area for Rijiyar Zaki as a result of Boko Haram activities, which terrified the area a few years ago.

“I was terrified when I received a call that our area was in great danger and we needed prayers for God to come to our rescue. Since then, I have been communicating with my relatives about the happening in the area, up till the time the criminals were arrested,” he recounted.

Our correspondents gathered that after the operation, some youths in the area went to the house where the kidnappers kept their victim and carted away whatever they deemed valuable.

Later in the evening of that fateful Tuesday, officials of the Kano State Urban Planning and Development Authority (KNUPDA) stormed the area with a bulldozer and demolished the three-bedroom house.

It was also observed that although the operation ended successfully, armed policemen were stationed in the area to forestall any possible breakdown of law and order. The presence of the armed security men kept the population at alert as they were told that the operation was not over yet.

Further observation by our correspondents showed that the police on duty in the area did not harass the people of the community as they were seen going about their businesses freely.

It was also observed that people from far and near have been going to catch a glimpse of the apartment where the Magajin Garin Daura was rescued.

The ward head of the area, Malam Nasir Sani Abubakar, told Daily Trust on Sunday that the operation began on Sunday when some security personnel, who said they were from Abuja, came to the area to conduct a search. “During the search, they arrested two of our neighbours, one with members of his

family and the other was alone,” he said, adding that they were released later in the evening.

Apparently due to its proximity to the state capital, Gangan Ruwa quarters is one of the fast-growing settlements in Kano. Daily Trust on Sunday observed that most of the houses built in the settlement have already been occupied while many others that are still under construction have reached various stages of completion.

Like residents of many other new settlements in the state, occupants of Gangan Ruwa have been living in peace and harmony for quiet sometime, without much security challenge. Most of the residents, especially men, usually go to the city in the morning for white collar jobs, private businesses or in search of menial jobs to cater for their families while women stay at home for domestic works. Children also go to school.

Most of the men in the area usually return to their respective homes in the evening and spend the night with their families. This has been the routine among residents of settlement.

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