

# 'How my daughter was kidnapped, killed by my friend's wife'

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*Aisha Umar*

Although death is destined by Allah for everybody in different ways, the memory of the circumstances that led to the death of my daughter taunts my mind every passing moment,” Malam Sani Umar said amidst tears as he reflected on his last moments with his late eight-year-old daughter.

The eight-year-old Aisha was declared missing three weeks ago, and two weeks after, her corpse was discovered in a well at Gandun Albasa Quarters in the Kano Municipal Local Government Area, several kilometers from her home. According to family sources, Aisha was abducted in the midst of her

siblings on her way home from Islamiyya school at Tudun Wada quarters of Nasarawa Local Government Area. She was later killed and dumped in a well while negotiation for ransom to secure her release was still going on.

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When *Daily Trust on Sunday* visited the bereaved family recently, they were yet to recover from the shock of the untimely death of their daughter. Sympathizers thronged the compound to register their condolences with the grieving parents.

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*Daily Trust on Sunday* observed that the mystery behind Aisha's kidnap and the torture she was said to have been subjected to before she eventually gave up the ghost has remained the topic of discussion among residents within the neighbourhood. This unfortunate incident has left parents in Kano metropolis in palpable fear.

Aisha's father could not control his emotions as he narrated how the incident happened. He was amazed that the whole thing was planned and accomplished by someone he trusted.

The little girl was reported to have been kidnapped in the company of her siblings on their way from an Islamiyya school by an unidentified woman who was covered in an Islamic veil. Two weeks after the incident, the police said

they had arrested two suspects in connection with the crime, but they refused to disclose the identities of the suspected culprits so as not to sabotage efforts at arresting the principal suspect.

However, three days ago, our correspondent learnt that a woman believed to be the mastermind of the alleged kidnap and murder had been nabbed.

Aisha's father, Umar, alleged that the dastardly act was planned and executed by the wife of his childhood friend.

Reflecting on his last encounter with the late child, Umar said, "Before this incident happened, on Saturday we were together at home and I observed that although she did not complain of ill health, she looked pale and sick. When I asked her what was happening, she said she was okay. That was the Saturday before her abduction on Sunday.

"The most surprising aspect of it was that the person that took her away came to our house that Saturday and my wife designed a beautiful henna for her. While my wife was doing the henna, she asked her which Islamiyya school Aisha attended. Aisha herself answered innocently that she attended Ihiya'ussunna, not knowing that it was a plan to abduct her," he alleged.

The suspect, whose parents live at Tudun Wada Quarters, is said to be a frequent visitor to Umar's family.

"On Sunday I didn't go anywhere. About 5pm I decided to visit my friend in the market and we were about to go for Magrib prayer when my phone rang. When I picked, they told me that Aisha was missing, that she did not return from Islamiyya. On hearing that, I became confused because the Islamiyya is

not far from our house. It was then that her sister said that on their way home, Aisha was taken by one woman who was wearing Islamic hijab. That was how we started looking for the girl, searching everywhere till 1am. Subsequently, I reported to the police.

“On Monday, about 5:30pm I received a text message saying, ‘Aisha is with us and she is in good condition.’ After that text message the line went off for over two hours. They sent another message that they would not release the girl until we gave them N10million,” Umar alleged.

He said the messages were sent in piecemeal, adding that after each message, the phone would be switched off till after two hours. This could be said to have prolonged the negotiation process, which led to the killing of the child.

He said that one week after the kidnap, he received a call threatening that they would kill the child if he didn't give them N10m. “I said the amount was too much and they asked how much I would offer. I said N80, 000, then they said I should give my wife the money to take to a location in Gwarzo Primary School, Karkasara.

“When I heard that, I knew it was another plan to trap my wife, so I replied that she had been sick before the incident; hence her blood pressure had risen so high that she could not do anything. The following morning, they sent another text message asking me to take the money to a location behind the mortuary at Abdullahi Wase Specialist Hospital.

“The following morning I took my wife, wrapped the money in a polythene bag and she dropped it at the specified location inside a female toilet at the hospital. We thought we would receive Aisha that day, but their phone was off till after two days before they called and said I had betrayed them,” he narrated.

He said that after all efforts to secure the release of the child proved abortive, he contacted the Department of State Service (DSS) and the police, through whose relentless efforts, the suspect, who happened to be the second wife of his childhood friend, was arrested.

In her confessional statement, according to Malam Umar, the suspect, simply identified as Fadila, said she first kept the girl with her sister at Zoo Road on a claim that the child’s mother was her friend who was divorced recently and her husband wanted to take custody of the child, that’s why she decided to take her away.

“She confessed that the girl was with her sister when the negotiation started, but after sometime she took her away and locked her in a toilet for three days. On the fourth day, she got tired of her and threw her in a well,” Umar added.

Police in Kano had, two weeks ago, confirmed the recovery of the corpse of the eight-year-old girl.

The spokesman of the command, DSP Abdullahi Haruna Kiyawa, who confirmed this in a statement, said the corpse was discovered in a well at Gandun Albasa area of Kano Municipal.

It would be recalled that some weeks before the abduction of Aisha, the Kano police command arrested three teenagers for allegedly abducting and killing a five-year-old boy, Ahmad Ado.

According to the commissioner of police in the state, Ahmed Iliyasu, the suspects, Ibrahim Ahmad, Abdumajid Mohammed and Musa Sanusi, on July 10 at 1:30pm, kidnapped Ahmad at Ma'ahat Nursery and Primary School, Karkasara Quarters and demanded N50million as ransom from his family.

Iliyasu explained that a team of Operation Puff Adder detectives from the anti-kidnapping squad immediately swung into action, using technical intelligence, and apprehended the suspects, who led them to the place where the boy was buried in an uncompleted building.