

<https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/about-us>**DAILY TRUST**<https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/>

Friday, April 10, 2020

Like 1.2M

Follow @daily\_trust

[Home \(https://www.dailytrust.com.ng\)](https://www.dailytrust.com.ng) / [Feature \(https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/topics/feature\)](https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/topics/feature)

ADVERTISEMENT

## Life, death of Emir, 'king of Jos thieves'

By Lami Sadiq, Jos | Published Date Apr 2, 2020 2:19 AM



*Life, death of Emir, 'king of Jos thieves'*

Amongst the elderly and middle aged in Jos, the Plateau State capital, the name Garba Emir resonates and brings back memories of the man who was said to be the king of thieves and ran his extensive crime network from his simple home where victims of theft could visit to lobby for the return of their property. Until he was shot dead in police custody, Emir lived a simple life in his residence at Layin Makafi and was easily accessible to criminals, neighbours and visitors alike.

When Emir held sway, kidnapping and raiding of communities were unheard of and armed robbery wasn't so prominent, said Malam Salisu Carpenter, a Jos resident who grew up in the same community as the late Emir.

Emir and his loyal clique of criminals were said to have held sway in Jos and environs and many who knew him said despite his influence on criminals, he never personally participated in criminal operations. He was mostly known for harbouring criminals and helping them dispose of stolen goods through his network that extended all the way to Bauchi, Gombe, Kaduna, Kano and other states. "They were swift at that time. Once you leave anything outside, whether a car or motorcycle or

anything of value, it would disappear,” said Salisu. Malam Bashir Musan Sati, who also grew up in the same area with Emir, said despite his profession, Emir was kind to his immediate community and frequented the mosque for prayers.

“He attended St. Paul Primary School in Jenta, but I am not sure if he ever completed his education. He was born and bred in Lungun Makafi, Ibrahim Katsina Ward. It was an area where most of the physically challenged persons lived and I remember his father was a blind man and at some point was the leader of the blind people there,” he said. Sati said Emir was a career criminal and everyone knew that, just that no one could do anything about it. “Professionally, he was a drug dealer, dealing in Indian hemp. That attracted other criminals to him. Whenever the criminals went out to commit their atrocities, they would come back to recount their operations to him and he accommodated them in his house,” he said. Because of his known network of disposing stolen goods, people from different parts of town reported stolen items to him.

ADVERTISEMENT

[HOW OVER 5000 NIGERIA MEN HAVE PERMANENTLY OVERCOME TERRIBLE BEDROOM PERFORMANCE DUE TO THIS RECENT DISCOVERY BY MEDICAL CONSULTANTS](https://bit.ly/2ILYhDx) (https://bit.ly/2ILYhDx)

“He would ask them the area where the item was stolen from and if it was taken by one of his boys, then you would negotiate payment and your item would be returned,” Sati said. “I could remember, my uncle’s motorcycle was stolen at some point and we went to him [Emir] and he was able to verify that those who stole it were not from the area. He told us the motorcycle was around a particular area in Jos and truly speaking, it was traced to that area.” “When you visit him to complain of a stolen item and he knows his boys did it, he would say his boy bought the things at a specific price and ask you to pay. Usually the price was never high but if you are lucky, he would just return it to you,” Salisu said. “There were times my older brother’s motorcycle was stolen and he asked them to return it without my brother even knowing. On the third attempt, he advised my brother to keep his motorcycle within the compound.” Despite the profession he came to be known for, Malam Salisu said Emir had once worked as a carpenter and later sold palm oil and soft drinks. “We heard that at the beginning of his venture into crime, he had used his carpentry tools to attempt stealing a Vesper motorcycle but was arrested. After spending two years in prison he came and asked the tenants in his late father’s house to vacate and he started accommodating thieves and other criminals. Gradually he became their leader and was nicknamed Emir,” Salisu said. “He tried twice to repent but somehow he was always lured back to crime,” Salisu added. Though it was well known what Emir did for a living, reporting him to the police was counterproductive because the police knew who he was and what he did. His

connection within the police was said to be strong. “His activities were not something that anybody could do anything about because of fear of repercussion. He might not personally attack you but the possibility of the criminals he was harbouring attacking you was high,” Sati said. Perhaps Emir saw the community’s gesture as a debt and he protected them from his clique of criminals. He was said to have warned against stealing in his neighbourhood. “Whenever he was passing through Masalacin Jumaá on Fridays, he normally stopped by to greet my late father and when he returned from the Friday prayers, he also stopped by and my father sometimes teased him by saying ‘hope there won’t be any operation within our area,’” Sati said.

close

close

Emir’s arrest and subsequent death happened at a time a new Commissioner of Police was posted to Plateau State. “The then CP was one Amen Oyakhire and he was on a mission to bring sanity to the state,” Salisu said. While recalling the day Emir was picked up by the police, Sati said, “They passed through Buzzu Street where we were all seated and went to his house. Reliably we were told that when they got to his house, he told his wife that he would not be returning and said goodbye to her. They conducted a search in his house and that was the last anybody saw of him. “Those who were in the police cell with him later came back with news that he was dead. There was one Kawu who was also a criminal and was close to him, I think he was the first person who brought the news that Emir was killed.” His corpse has not been seen or released to his family till date. Though the police could not explain how Emir was killed, the Plateau State Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Tyopev Terna, said Emir was a terror and his death was significant. “Immediately he died, the people he was always hosting in his house fled. His lieutenants were not bold enough to carry on activities knowing that if he could be killed, the same thing could happen to them,” Terna said. “We learnt from one of our personnel [a Sergeant then] who is now a superintendent of police, that when he was killed, people celebrated, not only that the police had less job to do but that they could sleep with their eyes closed,” he said. Sati agreed Emir’s network was smashed with his death. But a decade later, Emir’s son, nicknamed Dan Tsilli took to crime, but unlike his father, he was said to be a violent drug addict and member of the ‘yan daba gang. “Emir never wanted any of his children to join crime because I remember shortly before the police picked him up, one of his sons bought a television set without receipt and he [Emir] beat him until he was unconscious. Dan Tsilli however grew into crime after his father’s death,” Salisu said. Like his father, Dan Tsilli met a violent end when he was gunned down by security agents sometime around 2008 during one of the Jos crises. “Some said he was killed while trying to evacuate women and children from the Congo/Russia area. He was celebrated for being brave while others said he was killed by security agents who have had him on their radar for a while. Only God knows,” Salisu said.

This feature was first published on Jul 26, 2018.

#### Related

Life, death of Emir, 'king of Jos thieves'  
(<https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/life-death-of-emir-king-of-jos-thieves-262706.html>)

Emir of Wase dies at 64  
(<https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/emir-of-wase-dies-at-64.html>)

'I never dreamt of becoming Emir of Bauchi' (<https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/i-never-dreamt-of-becoming-emir-of-bauchi.html>)

Download Daily Trust News App

 Get it on

Google Play

([https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.dailytrust.app&utm\\_source=dailytrust\\_site&utm\\_campaign=app\\_campaign&pcampaignid=MKT-Other-global-all-co-prtnr-py-PartBadge-Mar2515-1](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.dailytrust.app&utm_source=dailytrust_site&utm_campaign=app_campaign&pcampaignid=MKT-Other-global-all-co-prtnr-py-PartBadge-Mar2515-1))

Other-global-all-co-prtnr-py-PartBadge-

Mar2515-1) (<https://itunes.apple.com/lookup?id1457008>)

Share this article

close

close

Join us on

Like 1.2M

Follow @daily\_trust

Join our whatsapp group here for Breaking News, Exclusives , others (<https://chat.whatsapp.com/GJSPn2M4kcBI4VMtffsBU>)

Complain about a story or Report an error and/or correction: +2348189301900 (Whatsapp and SMS only) Email: [dtonline@dailytrust.com](mailto:dtonline@dailytrust.com)

DISCLAIMER: Comments on this thread are that of the maker and they do not necessarily reflect the organizations stand or views on issues.