

# Family, Friends Mourn As Major Mohammed Is Buried In Benue

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**It was a scene of anguish as Fatima Gombe, the mother of slain Major Abdulkadir Gombe Mohammed, Commander of a Nigerian Army troop killed in Katsina State and other relations buried his remains in Makurdi.**

Late Mohammed was killed in an ambush by bandits on Thursday in Katsina State and his body brought to Makurdi in Benue State where it was interred.

His corpse had arrived Makurdi on Saturday night and interred in line with Islamic rites at the Muslim Cemetery close to SRS junction in North Bank, Makurdi shortly after the Army received the body at the Nigerian Army School of Military Engineering (NASME) barracks and performed necessary service honours before handing it over to his family for burial.

Daily Trust reports that the deceased was killed around Malali village in Kankara Local Government Area when he responded to a call for reinforcement.

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He was the commanding officer of the base at Sabon Garin Dan-Ali on the Kankara/Dutsinma Road in Katsina State.

His mother in an emotion laden voice told our correspondent in Makurdi on Sunday shortly after the three-day prayers held for the repose of his soul that she was, however, consoled by the good life the late army officer lived, stressing that he was loved by all people.

“We will greatly miss him; only the Almighty Allah can console us. I pray the Almighty to grant him eternal rest. God who gave him to us will grant us strength to bear the loss. He left behind his wives and children and I pray that God will help them,” the mother said.

The family house of slain Major Abdulkadir Gombe Mohammed in North Bank community of Makurdi metropolis in Benue State was on Sunday filled with sympathisers from all walks of life just as some joined to offer prayers for the repose of his soul.

Sympathisers, who sat together in groups at the No.2 Eri Street where the family house is located, talked glowingly about the attributes of the deceased officer, which endeared him in the hearts of residents of the North Bank community.

The residents – Muslims and Christians – were certain about his kindness towards everyone who came his way as they mourned his passing.

Sadly, the late Mohammed was said to have left behind two wives and three children. The youngest of the wives, Amina whom he married barely one month ago during the holy Ramadan season was grieving so much that she was unable to utter a word.

Farida, the first wife who was also sobbing bitterly, only muttered the courage to whisper her name to our correspondent from the corner of the parlour where she sat down with tears dripping down her cheeks.

The deceased's younger brother, Mohammed Isa Gombe, said the deceased was a father figure to him.

He said, "I cannot exactly express how I feel in my heart, only God can tell the state of my heart. My elder brother related well with everybody and not only would his immediate family miss him, the entire community – Muslim and Christians – alike.

"He helped a lot of people to join the military and even about 13 of them are currently undergoing training. These are apart from those already in the Army, which he singlehandedly helped to facilitate their recruitment. So, that's why the whole North Bank community and Benue State as whole will miss him.

"He helped at least more than 50 Muslims and Christians to join the military. He came to Benue regularly and even last month, he was here in Makurdi. He went to primary school here in Makurdi and Command Secondary School, also in Makurdi before he proceeded to the University of Maiduguri after which he joined the Army in 2008/2009.

"I can best describe him as an angel to this community. At his burial here yesterday, (Saturday) the crowd was a testimony that his death touched the whole community."

Also, Garba Ishaq Yakubu, a cousin of the slain officer, said that he was in disbelief over the demise of Major Mohammed until the corpse was brought home to the family house where his late father, a businessman and politician lived.

Yakubu said that the house – situated in a densely populated Hausa/Muslim vicinity – of Makurdi's North Bank was where the late officer was raised.

“The news of my elder brother’s death came to me as a shock when I heard it. I didn’t believe it until yesterday (Saturday) when I saw his body with my eyes as he was being prepared and buried past 8pm. He was brought into Makurdi, taken to NASME barracks where he was paid his last respect and brought back here (family compound) where everything about Islamic rites were done before he was taken to the cemetery and interred.

“He was very jovial, understanding and helpful to people whether they were minors, adults or youths. He has been of assistance to everyone who came his way using his position to also ensure that youths achieved their dreams.

“Even the friends he grew up with, he assisted them to better their lives in many ways he could and lend helping hands to others who needed help without them asking first. When the news of his demise broke, some people even came to share how he helped them without making it public; that he paid their children school fees and many other things,” he posited.

Similarly, Ibrahim Salisu, another cousin of the deceased, believes that the vacuum created by his demise would be hard to fill.

“He was a simple, gentle and helpful personality. He had a cordial relationship with the community. We were all shocked about his death because he lived his life serving the community, helping our boys to enrol into the Nigeria Army.

“He hated seeing our boys idle so he assisted in engaging them gainfully. Since the news of his death broke, people have stayed here, slept here while waiting for his corpse to arrive so they could pay their last respect to him,” Salisu said.

In the same vein, a father figure of the deceased’s family, Ahmed Yusuf, a Deputy Controller of Immigration who was recently transferred to Abuja from Lagos described the hallmark of late Major Mohammed as humility personified.

“The deceased was a son to my late uncle. His father was a junior brother to my father. We grew up under the watchful eyes of our parents; he was a very humble person. He started his educational career here in Makurdi before he went to graduate in Maiduguri and joined the Nigeria Army and rose to the rank of a Major before the ugly incident.

“As for his character, humility is one virtue I can use to describe him as an individual. As I speak to you now, since knowing the deceased, nobody has come out to say he has problems with him both home and abroad, even professionally.

“He was a friend to all; he was a good person and I can say he was an excellent character. He was humble to the core and we actually missed him. But as we believe in Islam, God has ordained for him to go and it was time for him to go, nobody can stop it,” Yusuf maintained.