

# How Boko Haram Killed 40 Farmers In Borno – Survivors



a sesame farm

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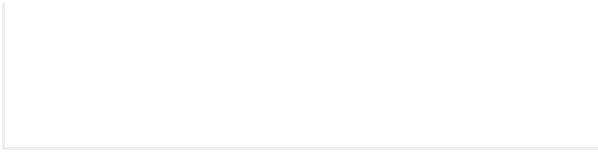


**More facts have emerged as to how Boko Haram terrorists killed at least 40 farmers in Dumba community in Baga, Kukawa Local Government Area of Borno State on Sunday.**

News of the attack emerged yesterday and towards the evening, details of the heinous act started trickling in as attention of millions of Nigerians and authorities moved to Maiduguri.

Survivors told *Daily Trust* yesterday that the victims were attacked in their farms around 3pm.

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They said the terrorists accused the farmers of conniving with troops despite the “permission” given them by the insurgents to carry out their farming activities.

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Adam Yusuf, who escaped the attack, spoke from Baga town on the telephone, saying the casualty figure could be much higher than 40 as confirmed by the Borno State government.

He said the terrorists assembled more than 1,000 fishermen and farmers, separated children and women from men, and opened fire on them.

Yusuf narrated: “Their leader told us that we (farmers) were serving as informants of the military by exposing their hideouts and movements within the general areas.

“We should be talking about 70 and above (that were killed). We were more than a thousand they assembled. The operation lasted for almost three hours. Some people are currently receiving treatment at Baga General Hospital and two persons with severe wounds were also referred to Monguno General Hospital.

“They mentioned all their strongholds including Dumba, Yatakura, Tilma, Madayi and other adjoining communities.”

Another survivor, Musa Yakubu, said they had crossed the fish dam to Dumba Island where they planted beans before the terrorists rounded them up and opened fire on them.

“Those who know how to swim escaped through the dam before the military came to rescue some of us in the morning (yesterday).

“We all went to the island from Gwoza to cultivate beans. We lost over 40 of people in the attack and some sustained bullet wounds.

“We thought they came to set their terms as they do to others. Unfortunately, they opened fire on us. In fact, I don’t know how I managed to escape,” he said.

A fisherman, who participated in the rescue of surviving farmers, said the insurgents usually issued permits to farmers and fishermen in the area.

“Unfortunately, these people (the victims) didn’t get clearance from the Boko Haram terrorists. So they considered them informants.

“They rounded them up in different groups, gathered them in one place and opened fire of them,” the farmer told Daily Trust anonymously.

He added: “The soldiers are stationed in Mile 4 which is less 5 kilometres from where the incident happened.”

He also said that “visiting certain places in the Lake Chad is not possible because they are mostly under the control of Boko Haram terrorists, and for more than 10 years, going there remains an invitation to death.

“To tell you the truth, the military has not reclaimed an inch from where they were stationed since the operation started in Baga 10 years back, what kind of operation is that?”, he asked.

He said the insurgents had taken control of all the fertile islands that are not up to 15 kilometres far from the Baga town and the military location.

“You cannot go to the water around Dukuri, Kwalam, Meri, Shuwaram to catch fish. The boys are in total control of that location,” he said.

He said all the people killed in the attack were bean farmers from Gwoza, adding that “one of them, Abba Gwoza, had cultivated a vast hectares of land and harvested onions worth over N30 million.

“But, I’m sure he could not do that without the approval of the Boko Haram insurgents.”

Another farmer, Mohammed Bashir, stated: “We know the risk involved but fishing and farming is the only thing we know. The life in IDPs is like bondage. So, they (terrorists) allow us and fishermen to go and farm without any fear in as much we abide by their rules.

“But lately, they allowed people to do the hard labour, but when the time of harvest comes, they would come and kill our people, instil fears in us and harvest all the farm produce.

“They know how to harvest beans and other food items; the only thing they do not do is the hard labour, which is the clearance of the farm, planting of the seeds and other maintenance.”

### **Farmers negotiate with ISWAP – Security source**

A security source said the farmers had negotiated with a faction of ISWAP, paying levies to get access to their farmlands.

He said the arrangement was to allow the farmers to cultivate their crops.

He said another ISWAP group, who were not aware of the agreement, intercepted the farmers, opened fire and killed many of them.

He said the military had established secured perimeters where farmers and fishermen could operate under protection.

“However, some farmers opted to negotiate directly with ISWAP, bypassing the safe zones, which ultimately resulted in tragic consequences,” he said.

The source also stated that farmers and fishermen, who entered ISWAP-controlled areas, were used as “slaves, couriers or logistical suppliers when they failed to meet demands.”

### **Pursue attackers, Zulum tells military**

The Borno State Government confirmed the killing of 40 farmers in the attack.

The Commissioner for Information and Internal Security, Prof. Usman Tar, said Governor Babagana Umara Zulum condemned the attack and called on the Armed Forces to track and neutralize the criminals.

“Investigation has commenced on the circumstances behind this attack. Initial report indicates about 40 farmers have been killed while the whereabouts of many who escaped the attack are being traced for reunion with their families.

“Let me assure the citizens of Borno that this matter will be thoroughly investigated for further necessary action,” Zulum said. “Let me use this opportunity to call on the armed forces to track and deal decisively with the perpetrators of this heinous act of violence against our innocent citizens.”

He warned civilians to stick within designated “safe zones” that have been cleared of militants and munitions by the military.

He also said the farmers had strayed outside one such security corridor, venturing into an area known for insurgent activities and minefields.

### **Victims for mass burial today**

A security source said the bodies of the slain farmers had been recovered for a mass burial to be conducted today.

He advised that an arrangement should be put in place to avert a breach of security.

### **‘200 farmers killed in 5 years’**

*Daily Trust* reports that from 2020 to date, almost 200 farmers have been killed in various farming communities by the Boko Haram terrorists across Borno State.

In one of the major attacks on the farming community, Zabarmari, Jere LGA, over 40 farmers harvesting their crops in Koshebe rice paddy were ambushed by terrorists and slaughtered.

In June 2023, seven farmers were killed by suspected Boko Haram members in Damboa LGA of the state.