

## Boko Haram leader Shekau executes group's spokesman

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•Shekau

Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau sensationally announced yesterday he had executed the spokesman for the terror sect -Tasiu who is also known as Abu Zinnira.

Shekau accused Tasiu and another senior commander ,Baba Ammar, of plotting to oust him from the terror sect's leadership.

He claimed they had been sending fighters out on illegal raids, spreading rumours among his lieutenants that he intended to kill them and portraying him as unfit to lead.

An agency report quoted Shekau as telling an inner circle of his group that "I killed Tasiu ."

"You should hear me: I killed Tasiu, hear me well," he told the gathering on December 18,2016.

The meeting had been called to clear the air over the bad blood apparently sparked within the group by Tasiu's elimination.

Shekau, in a 50-minute audio recording of the meeting referred to "those elements grumbling over the killing of Tasiu."

Tasiu and "other elements" ,he charged, had tried to portray him to the rank and file as "not on the right track."

And he asked:"Tell me, what is the punishment for the people that plot against their leader?"

"By our code of allegiance, we don't hesitate to pass appropriate sanction on any one of us that commits an offence."

He said nothing about the fate of the "other elements."

He branded those opposed to him and his style in the sect as devil's advocates who are "at work, trying to instill doubt in the minds of our fighters after realizing we are gathering momentum for real jihad."

He added:"They try to confuse whoever they see getting close to me and distance him from me, they are going about dampening the spirit of our fighters."

Shekau's outburst is a fresh confirmation of division within the sect.

Last August, the Islamic State group, to which Shekau had pledged allegiance in March 2015, named Abu Musab Al-Barnawi as now Boko Haram's leader.

Barnawi is the son of Mohammed Yusuf, founder of Boko Haram.

His death in police custody in 2009 is cited as the immediate cause of the Boko Haram insurgency which has claimed over 20,000 lives in the Northeast.

Shekau succeeded Yusuf.

He rejected the change in leadership and insists he is still in charge of the sect.

Abu Zinnira appeared in several video recordings of Boko Haram, including one released last August in which he was seen with Shekau and other senior leaders of the group.

which he warned that the sect would kill the remaining Chibok girls with the insurgents should troops attempt to rescue them.

Barnawi's faction has repeatedly accused Shekau of high-handedness and indiscriminate killings of his lieutenants.



It is also opposed to Shekau's indiscriminate targeting of civilians.

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