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Soldiers killed my 4 undergraduate children but God will avenge their death -ABU lecturer (/soldiers-killed-my-4-undergraduate-children-but-god-will-avenge-their-death-%E2%80%94abu-lecturer)

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A journalist and a teacher of Mass Communication at the Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, Isa Waziri Gwantu, tells Saturday Tribune's MUHAMMAD SABIU about his four undergraduate children killed by soldiers during a raid on the house of Shi'ite leader, Sheikh Ibrahim El-Zakzaky, in Zaria and how his wives took the experience. Excerpts:



(http://tribuneonline.ng.com/sites/default/files/police-killed_0.jpg)

Your sad story was carried in some newspapers, can you share with us your background?

I am a journalist and a Mass Communication lecturer at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. I hold the title of the Waziri of Gwantu III. I am an activist and an advocate of positive change. I was the secretary of Scholars for Good Governance - Buhari/El-Rufai 2015 project at the university, through which we carried out office-to-office campaign for the president and the Kaduna State governor last year.

It was reported that you lost four of your children during the recent clash between your sect (Shi'ite) and the army? Can you tell us how they were killed?

To the best of my knowledge, there was no clash; what happened was a genocide by the Nigerian Army against the followers of one of the most peace-loving and patriotic religious leaders in the country, Sayyid Ibrahim Zakzaky. Christians who used to run to his house for refuge whenever there was ethno-religious crisis in Zaria can testify to this claim. My four undergraduate children - Muhammad (21), Fatima (20) and twins, Hassan and Hussein (18) were murdered by the soldiers in the house of my spiritual leader on the 13th of December, 2015, when they invaded his house with the motive of killing him after they had killed hundreds of his followers. They later burnt and buried many of our members in mass graves in various locations outside Zaria.

How are you coping with their deaths? Do you want diyah [blood money]?

Thank God, I have overcome it [the incident]. Great men of faith have been tested like this. I have no option but to leave everything to the Lord of Adam, Noah, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad (peace of Allah be upon them). Allah will avenge us since He has forbidden the shedding of the blood of even animals without any justifiable reason.

Compensation?! Nothing in this world can replace my innocent and beloved children.

Can you share with us how you raised your children, the schools they attended and what their aspirations were?

I denied myself befitting shelter and car to make sure that these children got to the university, especially considering the fact that I am the last child in my family of 12 and the only one privileged to attain my academic height. My children passed through various schools, right from inception, to where they were, ABU, Zaria, before soldiers that were employed and paid with our hard-earned money to protect us eventually killed them in cold blood, burnt them and denied me the opportunity to see their corpses and bury them according to Islamic rites.

How many children do you have left?

Glory be to Almighty Allah Who gives and takes. I have 10 left for now.

How did their mother(s) react to the news of their deaths?

They belonged to two mothers. The eldest two were from my Yoruba wife, from Ilorin, and the twins were from my Fulani wife. In fact, I think, they were not as devastated as I was. They both exhibited a strong faith in Allah and asked Him to punish all those that gave the order for the killing of our children and all those that had a hand in any way in the termination of sacred lives.

Did you have any premonition of your children's deaths?

No.

Why do you think your sect is having problems with the security operatives?

I think it is not unconnected to the war declared on Muslims all over the world by 'globalists'. It is not a secret that the Nigerian security agencies are proxies of the forces behind the ordeals of Muslims in different parts of the world like Palestine, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, Somalia and Myanmar.

Is it true your sect does not recognise any authority — even the nation's authorities — other than your spiritual leader, Sheikh Ibrahim El-Zakzaky?

I told you the role some of us played in the victory of the people that have turned out to be our killers today.

What about the allegation that the military wing of your sect is training youths to fight the state?

That is the most irritating, absurd, laughable and unintelligible of all the allegations against us. How could we have that and yet be unable to defend ourselves and our leader against the army who took 48 hours killing us like flies? This is a false flag and a black propaganda no discerning mind will believe. The video they are showing on television are videos of Boys Scout members of the movement, which all religious groups have in the country. The Izala, Tariqa and even our Christian brethren have such Boys Scouts. It is nothing aberrational but, you know, as Ida B. Wells, the celebrated black American investigative journalist, said, "Those that commit the murders, write the report."

I want to emphasise that unlike other Muslims who are busy funding terrorism in Syria, Iraq and other parts of the world, Shia Muslims do not believe in weapons or killing even animals. What we believe in and do is intellectual debate and discourse. People that take up arms lack intellectual ability to debate. We are not Boko Haram, neither are we ISIS who kill and behead people.

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