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- [Feature »](#)

You are here: [Home](#) / [News](#) / Boko Haram leader, wife killed in 5-hour gunfight •Slain leader, 2002 BUK graduate •Security agents arrest son

# **Boko Haram leader, wife killed in 5-hour gunfight •Slain leader, 2002 BUK graduate •Security agents arrest son**

January 25, 2012 by Mustapha Salihu



Security agents on Tuesday killed Uzairu Abba Abdullahi, a textile merchant suspected to be a leader of the violent Islamic sect, Boko Haram, during a five-hour gun duel.

His pregnant wife, who was at his residence in Hotoro, Nassarawa Local Government Area when the team stormed the building, was also shot dead. After the battle, the security men reportedly arrested one of the late businessman's sons.

A family source described Abdullahi as a 2002 Mass Communication graduate of Bayero University, Kano, but security sources described him as one of the planners and executors of last Friday's multiple bomb blasts and attacks on Kano.

Our correspondent gathered that the team that killed him comprised soldiers, policemen and security personnel drawn from other forces. The team reportedly stormed the suburb at about midnight following a tip-off that members of the sect were there in large numbers.

*THE PUNCH* learnt that on reaching the house, Abdullahi and his men opened fire and the team returned fire. A senior security official told our correspondent that the gunfight raged from 12.30am-5.30am.

Our correspondent reports that while the battle lasted, residents were kept awake for hours as guns boomed. The scene of the incident is close to the farm and horse stable of Chief Deinde Fernandez, who is also Garsan Fulanin Kano, a traditional title in the Kano emirate.

A security official said an army officer who was part of the security operatives was shot in the leg. He was said to be the only victim on the side of the security agents.

The source said, "We had trailed this man for some time. We placed surveillance on him as soon as we received a tip-off that he usually conducted himself in a suspicious manner. So, we decided to pick him up.

"Unfortunately, in the course of the exchange of gunfire, he and his wife were killed. But we captured his son alive.

"The order we got from our *Oga* (higher authorities) was for us to catch him (Abdullahi) alive so he could be useful in our investigation of Friday's multiple bomb attacks on security forces and innocent Nigerians. Unfortunately, his resistance led to his death."

*THE PUNCH* gathered that before the operatives swooped on the Boko Haram leader, the security authorities had ordered the 9th Squadron Mobile Police, which is close to the scene of the operation, to be on standby.

The early morning Muslim prayers could not be said in the area until about 6.30am, instead of the usual 5.30am.

Efforts made to confirm the incident by newsmen were rebuffed by the army and police authorities who refused to give details of the attack.

The late Abdulahi's cousin, Alhaji Ali Abdullahi, confirmed the death of the suspect and his wife to reporters.

According to him, the late suspected Boko Haram leader hailed from Gaya Local Government Area in the state. However, he claimed he was an easygoing man who related well with his neighbours. He described the incident leading to his death as "very unfortunate".

Ali also lamented that all the efforts made by the family to recover his cousin's corpse and that of his wife, for the purpose of prompt burial, had proved abortive.

Our correspondent gathered that most residents of Hotoro have relocated from the area to safer zones within the metropolis out of the fear that the security agents might return.

Meanwhile, the Kano State Government has organised a mass burial for unclaimed bodies from the Friday attacks. *THE PUNCH* gathered that about 50 bodies were buried in Kalebawa village, along Kano-Danbatta road on Tuesday.

A source at the Murtala Muhammed Specialist Hospital, who pleaded anonymity, said the corpses, which had been at the hospital since the attack, had started to decompose.

Our correspondent saw two vehicles of the mortuary unit, filled with the corpses, leaving the hospital. He later learnt that corpses that had been properly identified remained in the mortuary for their loved ones to claim.

There was no official confirmation of the actual number of the corpses taken for mass burial, however, as all efforts to contact the hospital officials proved abortive.

Also on Tuesday, the Emir of Kano, Alhaji Ado Bayero, led other emirs on a sympathy visit to the the victims receiving treatment at the Murtala Muhammed Specialist Hospital.

Emir Bayero went in company with the Emir of Kazaure, Alhaji Najib Adamu; Emir of Dutse, Alhaji Nuhu Muhammad; and the Sardaunan Kano and immediate past governor of Kano State, Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau.

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