

## news

# Six of my colleagues dead, says rescued Chibok girl

Fidelis Soriwei,  
Olalekan Adetayo,  
Friday Olorok and  
Kayode Idowu

ONE of the missing schoolgirls abducted by the fighters of the Boko Haram Islamic sect from Government Secondary School, Chibok, Borno State, on April 14, 2014, Amina Ali Nkeki, has been found, the Nigerian Army has said.

Activists also told the BBC that Amina was found by a vigilante group on Tuesday in Sambisa Forest, close to the border with Cameroon.

Amina was reportedly recognised by a civilian fighter. She told her rescuers that six of her abducted colleagues had died while others were being held in Sambisa Forest by their abductors.

The fighter belonged to the Civilian Joint Task Force, a vigilante group set up to help fight Boko Haram.

Aboku Gaji, leader of the vigilante group in Chibok, said, "The moment this girl was discovered by our vigilantes, she was brought to my house. I instantly recognised her, and insisted we should take her to her parents.

"When we arrived at the house... I asked the mother to come and identify someone. The moment she saw her, she shouted her name: 'Amina, Amina!' She gave her the biggest hug ever, as if they were going to roll on the ground, we had to stabilise them.

"The mother called the attention of other relations to come out and see what is happening. The girl started comforting the mother, saying: 'Please Mum, take it easy, relax. I never thought I would ever see you again, wipe your tears. God has made it possible for us to see each other again.'

"Afterwards, we had to make them understand that the girl would not be left in their care. She must be handed over to the authority."

Hosea Abana Tsambido, the Chibok community in the capital, Abuja, told the BBC that Amina had been found after venturing into the forest to search for firewood.

"She was saying... all the Chibok girls are still there in the Sambisa except six of them that have already died."

The Nigerian military said she was from the town of Mbalala, south of Chibok, from where 25 of the kidnapped girls came.

Amina was later moved to Maiduguri, the capital of Nigeria's Borno State.

Before their arrival in Maiduguri, the Borno State Governor, Kashim Shettima, who was apparently delighted about the news, told the visiting United Nations Under-Secretary on Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. Stephen O'Brien, that the freed girl might give information that could lead to the rescue of other abducted girls and perhaps to the hideouts of the insurgents.

The General Officer Commanding (GOC) 7 Division Nigerian Army, Brig. Gen. Victor Ezugwu, who

brought the girl to Shettima, told the media that the governor had promised to present the freed girl to President Muhammadu Buhari.

The governor said as a sign of honour, he would take the girl to Mr. President on Thursday (today).

The girl was not allowed to have a chat with the media as she was led to meet with the governor by military personnel.

Shortly after presenting the girl to the governor, Ezugwu told journalists that Shettima would hand her over to President Muhammadu who would in turn present her to the nation.

"I want to further confirm to you that, we have found one of the Chibok girls but we plead for your understanding on this issue, we need to give her time to rest as you can see she is traumatised and nursing a baby.

"The governor has told us that he did not want to take credit for this and will hand over the girl to Mr. President who will in turn unveil her to the nation," Ezugwu said.

As of the time of going to the press last night, the governor and the freed girl had not emerged to address the media.

The Acting Director, Army Public Relations, Col. Sani

Usman, who had earlier confirmed Amina's rescue in a statement on Wednesday, added that a suspected Boko Haram suspect, Mohammed Hayatu, who claimed to be the 'husband' of the girl had been arrested by the troops.

Usman, who had earlier given the name of the rescued girl as Fatmata Mbalala, said her name was Amina Ali.

He said that the troops of the 25 Task Force Brigade rescued the girl and arrested the terror suspect who claimed to be her 'husband' during what he described as a booking operation at Baale, near Damboa, Borno State.

He said that investigation

conducted by the Army showed that the girl was one of the 219 girls abducted from GSS, Chibok.

Usman said that the girl was rescued with her one-year old child, named Safiya.

He added that the girl, her 'husband' and the child had been taken to Maiduguri for medical screening.

"Please recall that we informed you that one of the abducted Chibok schoolgirls has been rescued earlier today and promised to give further details.

"Further to that, in continuation of Operation Crackdown, troops of 25 Brigade Damboa in

conjunction with the Civilian JTF deployed in one of the blocking positions at Baale, near Damboa rescued one Miss Amina Ali and a suspected Boko Haram terrorist, Mohammed Hayatu, who claimed to be her husband.

"Both were brought to the Headquarters of 25 Task Force Brigade Damboa at about 2.30pm today (Wednesday).

"Preliminary investigation shows that she is indeed one of the abducted Chibok schoolgirls abducted by Boko Haram terrorists on April 14, 2014 in Chibok and her name is Amina Ali as against Falmata Mbalala that was earlier stated.

Meanwhile, the BringBackOurGirls

movement on Wednesday in Abuja confirmed that the found girl is one of the over 276 schoolgirls kidnapped in Chibok.

A statement by the spokesperson for the #BringBackOurGirls#, Sesugh Akume, gave her name as Amina Ali Darsha Nkeki from Mbalala.

Akume said the girl had provided useful information that her other classmates were still being held by terrorists in Sambisa Forest.

Reacting, a civil rights organisation, ActionAid Nigeria, on Wednesday said the discovery of Amina was an indication that the 218 others would also be found.

A statement by its Country Director, Ojobo Ode Atuluku, said it was great news that the first Chibok schoolgirl had been found.



•L-R: President Paul Biya of Cameroon; Chairman of Heirs Holdings Mr. Tony Elumelu; and a former Prime Minister, Republic of Korea, Dr. Chung Un-Chan, at the International Economic Conference organised by the Government of Cameroon in Yaoundé...on Tuesday. Photo: UBA

## Dasuki admitted he kept arms, ammunition at home —Witness

Ade Adesomoju, Abuja

THE Federal Government on Wednesday opened its case before a Federal High Court in Abuja in the trial of the immediate past National Security Adviser, Sambo Dasuki, on charges of illegal possession of firearms and money laundering.

The prosecution first witness, Samuel Ogbu, who is an operative with the Department of State Services, confirmed that Dasuki admitted

keeping arms and ammunition in his private residence.

Ogbu, who was led in evidence by the lead prosecuting counsel, Mr. Dipo Okpese (SAN), said Dasuki failed to produce any licence authorising him to keep the arms and ammunition recovered from his house as required by law.

He narrated how the team he worked with interviewed Dasuki and obtained statement from him in the comfort of his home on July 17, 2015.

### Alleged N36bn fraud: EFCC launches manhunt for ex-gov Turaki

Eniola Akinkuotu

THE Economic and Financial Crimes Commission has launched a manhunt for a former Governor of Jigawa State, Saminu Turaki, who is standing trial for allegedly stealing N36bn when he was governor of the state from 1999 to 2007.

To this end, operatives on Wednesday night stormed his home located at 16 Dennis Osadebe Street, Aso Villa, Abuja. However, only members of his family were present as the ex-governor was nowhere to be found.

Turaki had also been accused in court of using N12bn out of the N36bn to fund former President Olusegun Obasanjo's failed third term bid in 2006.

Impeccable sources at the EFCC told our correspondent that operatives went to the house in a bid to execute an arrest warrant for Turaki who had failed to present himself for trial since 2011 when he was arraigned on 36 counts at the Federal High Court in Dutse, Jigawa State.

It will be recalled that the court had issued a warrant directing the Inspector-General of Police or his officers and the EFCC to arrest Turaki and bring him before the court. Justice S. Yahuza gave the order after Turaki failed to appear before the court.

The EFCC had previously declared him wanted.

A source at the anti-graft agency said, "We stormed the former governor's home around 7pm but we missed the former governor as only

He said a team of DSS investigators that searched the ex-NSA's private home in Asokoro, Abuja recovered five Tavor rifles, one Lugar rifle, one micro Uzi rifle, various categories of ammunition and cash in both local and foreign currencies.

He said Dasuki admitted, in his statement, that the arms and ammunition were recovered in his house.

He said Dasuki admitted that the arms and ammunition belonged to the Office of the

NSA and were for the use of his security detail.

He said Dasuki added that the items would be returned at the end of the day, but failed to say the day.

"On the said date, July 17, 2015, I joined other investigators, who went to the private residence of the defendant. On arrival, he was told why we are around. He took us into his house and made a special choice where we were to conduct the interview.

"We set up our recording equipment and the interview was recorded. We cautioned him, and told him the interview would be recorded and the whole process commenced.

"Once he accepted that he should be interviewed, I informed him there were three areas the interview would cover. They were the arms and ammunition recovered from his private residence; the cash recovered, foreign and local currencies and the vehicles recovered.

"He went through the list of the items as contained in the search warrant. We began with the arms and ammunition recovered. They were five Tavor rifles, one Lugar rifle, one Micro Uzi rifle and various categories of ammunitions," Ogbu said.

The witness said his team of interviewers was dispatched to Dasuki's house based on the report of the search team had

submitted to the service.

He said Dasuki's private residence and his guest house at No46 Mandela Street, Asokoro were searched by a team of investigators.

The witness said it was not to his knowledge that the weapon was ever issued to the defendant. He added that Tavor rifle could not be issued to an individual that did not have the written permission of the DG, DSS.

Under cross-examination by Dasuki's lawyer, Ahmed Raji (SAN), the witness said the evidence he gave about the allocation of arms and how they were issued were mainly as it related to the DSS.

He said he would not know if any other agency issued Dasuki licence to keep the arms and ammunition.

Earlier, the trial judge, Justice Adeniyi Ademola, had refused an application by Dasuki for stay of proceedings pending the determination of a motion he filed before the Court of Appeal, Abuja for that purpose.

The judge upheld the argument by Okpeseyi that by the provision of Section 306 of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act stay of proceedings was not allowed in criminal trial.

The judge adjourned till Wednesday for further trial