

# Army obeys last wish of Colonel killed by Boko Haram

From **James Ojo**, Abuja

**THE** last wish of slain Commanding Officer of the 118 Task Force Battalion of the Nigerian Army, fighting Boko Haram in the North East, Lieutenant Colonel Otobrise Usumu was that the General Officer Commanding (GOC) 8 Division allow his wife see his remains before interment.

His last request was confirmed in an exclusive chat with *The Sun* at the family house in Kubwa, a suburb of Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

Usumu died a week ago, while being evacuated to Maiduguri, Borno State, for expert medical attention after the vehicle in which he and his adjutant were traveling ran into landmines allegedly planted by insurgents.

Military sources said an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) allegedly planted by Boko Haram exploded on the road to Zare, a village before Damasak, as he led his troops back to Gudumbali, all in Borno.

Usumu's death takes the

tally of dead Lieutenant Colonels to be killed by Boko Haram since October to four. First was Lieutenant-Colonel K Yusuf, to be followed with the killing of Lieutenant-Colonel Abu Ali and Colonel B.U. Umar.

Usumu's death came less than 24 hours he bade his wife, Ufuoma, bye with a hug and kiss at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja.

It was learnt he made a quick dash to Abuja before the Yuletide and final preparations for comprehensive sweep of the operational theatre to end Boko Haram, as ordered by the Chief of Army Staff, Lt. Gen. Tukur Buratai.

The army chief had called on all officers and soldiers to buckle up and ensure that remnants of Boko Haram are completely cleared and promised to be with the soldiers at the war front with a view to having a colourful end of year and peaceful Yuletide in the North-East and Nigeria.

*Daily Sun* gathered from Usumu's family that he requested that his wife be allowed to see his remains

"when it dawned on him that he will not make it to the hospital because of injuries from the blasts.

"The soldiers who broke the sad news to us said that those were his last words before he died as they made their way to a Maiduguri hospital for better treatment," one of the brothers of the deceased said.

In compliance with his request, the family sent Barrister James Usumu, to lead the fallen officer's wife to Maiduguri, last Thursday, even as the family awaits official notice of Otobrise's death.

In Maiduguri, representatives of the family are expected to meet and exchange notes with the military on the burial plans for the slain officer.

But, the agony of the Usumu's was captured in a letter from his younger brother, Odiriviroro, to President Mohammed Buhari published by *Daily Sun* last Friday.

Odiriviroro had decried the long silence on his brother's death from the appropriate authorities, a development, he noted, was not encouraging.

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