

'Missing Army General May Have Been Consumed in Recent Jos Violence'

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By Seriki Adinoyi in Jos

As uncertainty continues to trail the whereabouts of Major General Mohammed Idris Alkali, who soldiers have been ransacking Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State looking for concrete evidence of what became of him, sources say he may have been killed.

He is suspected to have been killed alongside 13 others that died in the aftermath of the killing at Lopandet Village in Dwei community, Du district, Jos South Local Government Area.

However, spokesman of the Special Task Force (STF), Major Adam Umar said yesterday that the General's whereabouts was not established, and that the search for him was still ongoing.

Umar said it would not be proper conclude that the General was dead since there was no concrete and physical evidence to prove it.

However, the source said that Alkali may have been one of the people killed by the unknown gunmen on the 2nd of September, 2018 in Lopandet or the violence that ensued in the area after the killings.

General Alkali, retired from service as the Chief of Administration, Nigerian Army Headquarters a few weeks before he was declared missing on Monday, September 3rd 2018, a day after gunmen swooped on Lopandet and killed 13 persons. He was said to be travelling from Abuja to Bauchi, and somewhere around Jos his family lost contact with him.

There were speculations that he might have been killed and his body dumped in one of the mining ponds along Dura Du in Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State, where violence erupted after the gunmen killed the 13 persons.

Umar said the command had commenced search for the retired General, adding that he could not be said to have died for now until the body was recovered. "That is why we are searching for him."

There is currently a heavy presence of soldiers in the community where the incident was alleged to have happened, thus creating anxiety and panic.

Women in the community on Thursday protested the unusual military presence in the community.

Dressed in black attires, some of them half-naked, the women urged the soldiers to vacate their community since their presence created apprehension.

Reacting, the Search and Rescue officer in charge of the operation, Brig. General, Ibrahim Mohammed said they had it on credible intelligence that General Alkali got missing in that area, and that the army headquarters had mandated them to carry out the operation.

He assured that no amount of protest by the women would stop them from the operation, adding that they had contacted the community on the operation before it commenced.

Brig, General Mohammed said, "In an effort to search for the missing Major General Alkali, a lot of things were done, and all the hospitals in Jos were toured and checked. Besides, we have checked all the accident vehicles and scenes. And on credible intelligence, we now had to come to this community in the last one week. We are trying to find three things; one, is the General Alkali, who is now missing. We are also looking for his vehicle, which is a black Corolla vehicle, and we want to find out if he is still alive or not.

"Again, we have credible information that some vehicles were actually pushed into this pond. We've been here in the past three days trying to see if we can salvage anything from the pond. The pond is a mining site, and is very deep. We have a crane, and we have used all kinds of methods and as the last resort, we have decided that we are going to evacuate the water."

He said soldiers have been stationed there and would try to provide protection for the community and other communities in the state, alleging that the protesting women were being instigated from some quarters.