

JTF INVADES *BOKO HARAM*'S DEN: Kidnapped German, six gunmen killed

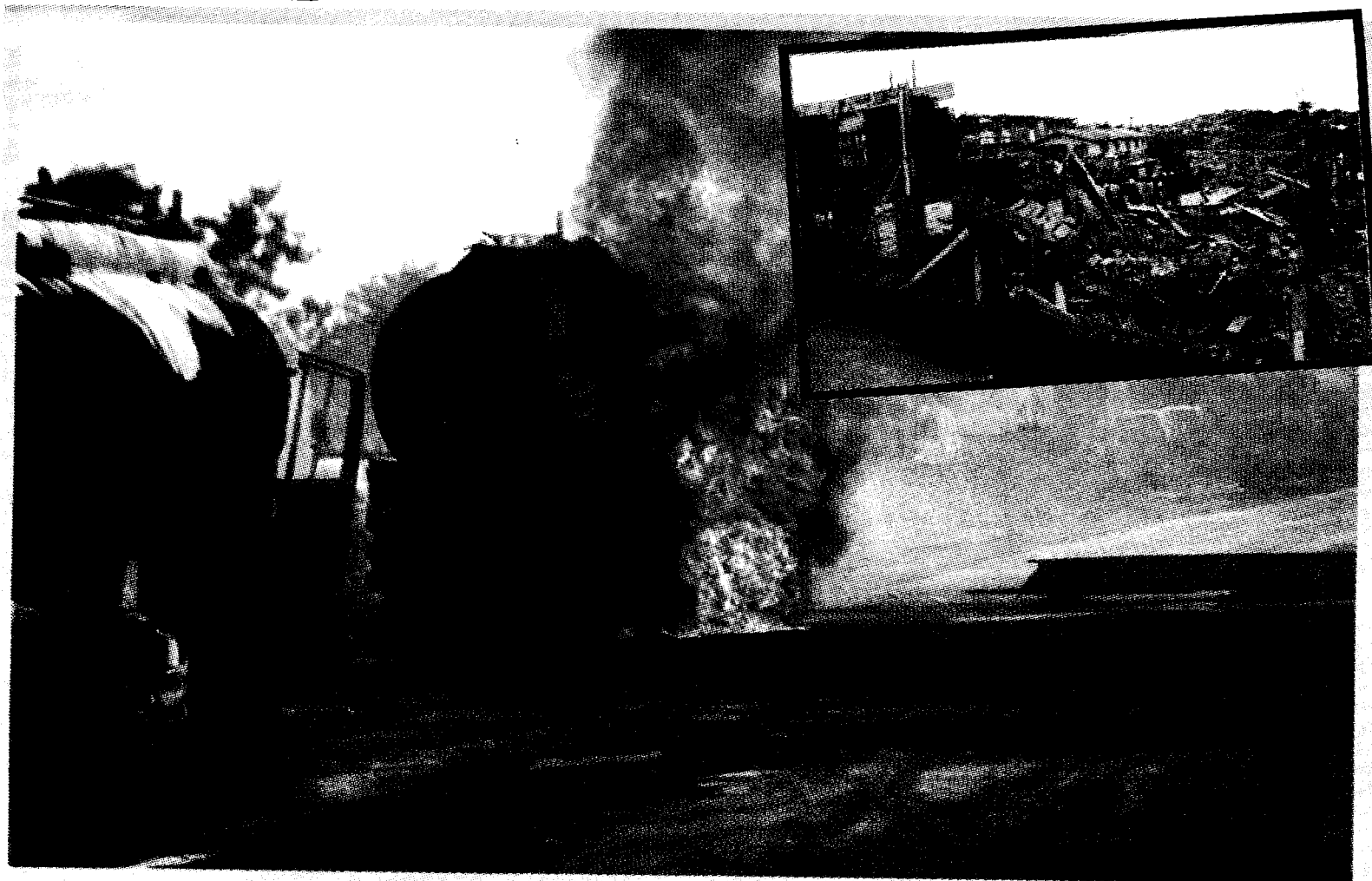
BY ABDULSALAM
MUHAMMAD

KANO—A German Engineer, Edgar Fritz Raupach, who was held hostage by gunmen since January 26 this year was killed by his captors yesterday when Nigerian security forces stormed their hideout, a bungalow apartment located at Danbare suburb, along Gwarzo highway, in Kano.

It was gathered that members of the security forces who conducted a raid on the building were unaware that the German was being held there but attacked the building based on intelligence

Continues on Page 7

UNILAG:
We'll
implement
President's
declaration
— NUC •P.10



TRAGEDY—No fewer than nine petrol tankers exploded, yesterday, on the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway. Some of the tankers at the scene of the accident. **INSET:** The collapsed church building in Ibadan. Photos: Wunmi Akinola and Dare Fasube. See more pictures on Pages 6 & 7.

Mr & Mrs

THE ELDERS AT THE LAST FAMILY MEETING, ASKED US TO TELL OUR HUSBANDS THAT THEIR CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE FINAL BURIAL CEREMONY OF OUR GRANDFATHER IS N500,000 EACH!





Rescue at the scene of explosion.

10 killed in multiple tanker explosions, building collapse

Continues from Page 6

injured in the accident which was caused by dangerous driving, while explaining that, one of the articulated vehicles involved in the accident caught fire which resulted in an inferno that consumed the two victims and some of the vehicles.

He said: "One of the articulated vehicles was trying to navigate between two cars and it lost control before catching fire that led to the accident on the road."

He however disclosed that the injured were receiving treatment at undisclosed hospitals near the scene.

He also said the burnt bodies had been

deposited at the Olabisi Onabanjo University Teaching Hospital, Sagamu.

According to him, the fire was put out by men of the fire service, adding that the FRSC was still making efforts to remove the burnt vehicles and control the traffic congestion that resulted.

As at the time of filing this report, men of Ogun State Traffic Compliance and Enforcement Agency were seen moving to the scene of the accident to control traffic and remove the burnt vehicles.

TRACE Unit Commander for Mowe-Ibafo, Olusola Johnson Ojuoro told newsmen that the agency was on ground to clear the accident scene.

Kidnapped German, 6 others killed as JTF ambush gunmen

Continues on Page 1

report that sect members were hiding there.

A reliable source who witnessed the incident related how it happened. Said he: "Members of the Sura Council were holding their meeting in a secluded place in Kano. The Sura Council is the highest decision making organ of Boko Haram comprising their operation commanders, thinkers, planners and strategists. Somehow, the security forces including the Joint Task Force got hint that Boko Haram members were meeting there and stormed the place in full force unknown to them that the kidnapped German national was being kept there. There was heavy exchange of fire and when the sect members realised that there was no escape for them they killed the German. In the course of the gun battle, the security forces killed all the members of the Sura Council at the meeting, no single one escaped. It was only their leader, Shekau who was not at the meeting that escaped being killed".

The German's death came on the heel of a similar incident on March 8th in Sokoto when a Briton and two Italians died in a failed rescue attempt by security

A counter terrorism officer who participated in yesterday's operation told Vanguard on condition of anonymity that seven people died in the operation while one AK 47 was recovered including 129 rounds of ammunition and a hand grenade

Security sources however explained that six people died during the encounter including the five sect members, a woman, while three soldiers were believed to have sustained injury from a blast that rocked the building during the operations.

Vanguard learnt that the sect members detonated a primed Improvised Explosive Device when the Special Forces stormed their residence.

In a statement issued by JTF spokesman in Kano, Lt Ikediche Iweha he confirmed the death of the German saying that he was killed by his captors who held him hostage.

Lt Iweha stated that the security forces stormed the enclave where he was being held near BUK, adding that "Upon search of the premises the security forces, found the hand cuffed gruesomely murdered corpse of an expatriate, later identified as the German national, Mr Egdar, who was kidnapped since January 26rd 2012 along Zaria bye pass Kano. The German was apparently killed by the terrorists on noticing the security forces".

Iweha added that "During a further search of the terrorists' hideout, the security forces recovered 2 AK 47 rifles, huge quantity of ammunition. 36 hand grenade and Improvised Explosive Devices stored by the terrorists for possible attack against innocent persons and security personnel".

Giving a graphic details of the operation, the Army Spokesman explained

that "At the early hours of this morning (31/5/2012) precisely at about 0635 hours, based on intelligence of an ongoing meeting of senior commanders of the terrorists elements, the JTF raided an enclave near Bayero University Kano new site, where the terrorists senior commanders were meeting". On sighting the security forces, the terrorist elements opened fire and threw Improvised Explosive Devices on the security forces. The security forces responded immediately resulting in a gun duel that lasted for about thirty minutes. During the encounter five of the terrorists were killed". A military source in the city confirmed that the body of the German engineer and the six other casualties have been deposited at the Armed Forces military Hospital in Kano.

Residents reported hearing explosions and gunfire in the neighbourhood of Danbare for more than half an hour at around 6:00 am, and said it appeared several hundred soldiers were involved along with trucks and armoured vehicles.

"Following intelligence reports, men of [a military task force] raided a hideout where he was being held by his abductors."

Ashootout occurred and the abductors also detonated explosives, said the official.

"They were subdued, but realising that it was the end for them, they killed the hostage," the official

added.

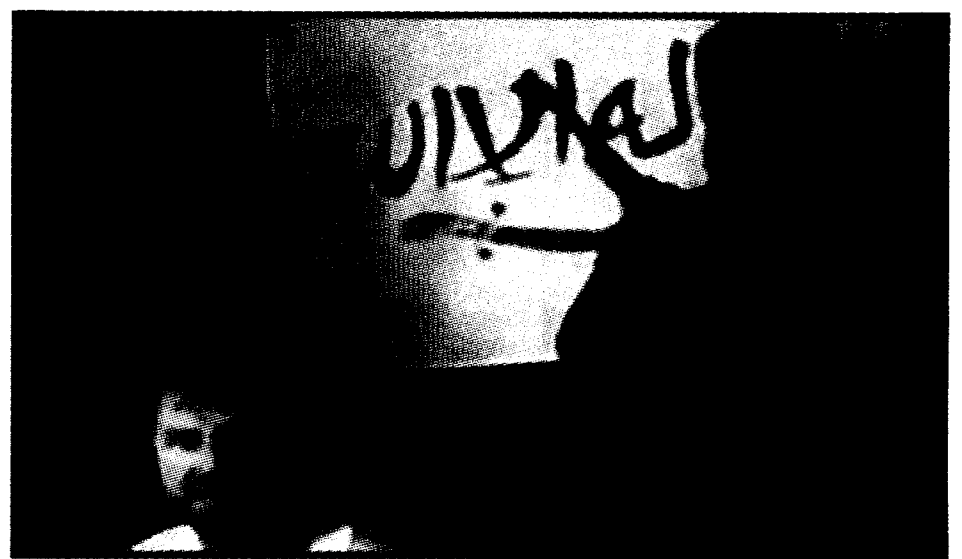
Another military source and a police source confirmed Raupach's death. He was said to have been shot and stabbed by his captors.

The sources also said a number of the abductors had been killed in the raid, with differing accounts putting the figure between two and five.

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) said in March it was holding the German and that it wanted to swap him for Filiz Gelowicz, the jailed wife of Fritz Gelowicz, the leader of a Sauerland-based group of Islamists. He is serving 12 years in



File photo of Late Edgar Fritz Raupach as a captive.



File photo of Edgar Fritz Raupach and his captors.

prison for a bomb attack, while she is serving two-and-a-half.

They released a video which showed Raupach flanked by two armed men, begging for his life.

Speaking first in

German and then English, he asks the German government to do something. "I beg my government to save my life," he said. "My life is in your hands now, I beg you, or these people will

kill me here."

AQIM has not been known to operate directly in Nigeria, though Islamist group Boko Haram and other extremists in the country are believed to have links to the group.