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BREAKING NEWS

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Boko Haram attacks three Emirs, kills one

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BY NDAHI MARAMA & WOLE MOSADOMI

The Emir of Gwoza in Gwoza Local Government Area of Borno State, Ahaji Idrissa Timta, was yesterday killed along with two police escorts during an ambush by gunmen suspected to be members of Boko Haram.

Three emirs including Timta and those of Askira, Alhaji Abdullahi Ibn Muhammed Askirama II and Uba, Alhaji Ali Ibn Ismaila Mamza II were travelling to Gombe for the burial of the Emir of Gombe Alhaji Shehu Usman Abubakar who died in a London Hospital Tuesday evening when they were attacked by the Boko Haram insurgents at about 9am along the Gombi-Garkida-Biu road.

Sources said that the Emirs of Askira and Uba escaped death by the whiskers. The policemen were trying to shield the three emirs from being killed when they were shot dead by the insurgents along the Garkida- Biu road.

Gwoza Local Government Area where late Timta hailed from is however, about 140 kilometres away from Maiduguri, the state capital while Askira /Uba also south of Maiduguri is about 160 kilometres from the state capital.

The former emir had on Sunday, April 13, decried the renewed insurgency in the area, saying it had crippled the socio-economic activities in his domain. Timta had specifically lamented then that the insurgents had been killing many people and were always blocking major highways, and appealed to security agents to intensify patrol on these roads to prevent such attacks.

Borno Government, Military confirm death

The Borno State government and the Defence Headquarters yesterday confirmed that Boko Haram terrorists attacked the emirs of Gwoza, Askira and Uba who were on their way to attend the burial of the emir of Gombe adding that the emir of Gwoza was killed in the attack..

In a statement signed by the Secretary to the State Government, SSG, Ambassador Baba Ahmed Jidda, the government further said it was saddened by the development.

Jidda who regretted the death, said that the late Emir was with the Emir of Askira, Alhaji Abdullahi Ibn Muhammadu

Askirama and their Uba Emirate counterpart, Alhaji Ali Ibn Ismaila Mamza, in the same vehicle when they were attacked as they headed to Biu to pick the Emir of Biu so they could all drive in a convoy to Gombe State for the funeral of the late Emir of Gombe later in the day. The Northern States Governors Forum yesterday reacted angrily to the killing of the Emir of Gwoza in Borno State, Alhaji Idrissa Timta and two policemen by suspected members of Boko Haram terrorists yesterday. The Forum also condemned attempt on the lives of Emir of Uba, Alhaji Ismaila Mamza and his Askira counterpart, Alhaji Mai Abdullahi Ibn Muhammadu Askirama by the gunmen believed to be members of Boko Haram.



(<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/05/body-emir-gwoza-recovered-dhq/emir-gwoza/>)

Emir of Gwoza Alhaji Idrissa Timta

Killing callous, irresponsible and war on traditional institution, Northern Governors

The Northern governors described the killing not only as irresponsible, callous and an affront on collective heritage of Nigerians but also as a war on the traditional institution in the country.

However, according to Jidda, ‘‘the Emir was killed around 9am today (yestrady) following a bloody attack by some gunmen believed to be members of the Boko Haram along Tashan Alade on the way to Biu town, headquarters of Biu Local Government Area in Southern Borno State.

’’The late Emir of Gwoza had visited his counterpart, the Emir of Uba yesterday and passed the night in Uba ahead of their planned trip. The two Emirs were (later) joined by the Emir of Askira. The three drove in the same vehicle with the intention of going to Biu to be joined by their counterpart in Biu.

’’Unfortunately as they were driving in convoy to Biu, they were ambushed by gun men around Tashan Alade, soon after passing Garkida. The gunmen came after the convoy, specifically targeted the vehicle conveying the three Emirs and opened fire on them. The Emir of Gwoza was unfortunately killed by the attackers while the Emirs of Askira and Uba escaped unhurt. A policeman in the convoy was shot by the attackers but he survived the attack.

’’The late Emir was in the first class status following his recent elevation by Governor Kashim Shettima.’’

Jidda further paid glowing tribute to the late Emir saying he ‘‘was indeed a great man who worked very hard to promote peace and progress in Gwoza. He was a pillar and one of the rallying points in Borno State. He visibly worked very hard in the search for peace in Gwoza since the insurgency began.

’’Borno State Government is terribly shocked by this incident. The Government prays that Allah admits the late Emir into aljanna Firadaus and give the family, members of the Gwoza Emirate Council, the people of Gwoza, the state Council of Chiefs and the entire people of Borno State the fortitude to bear this very traumatic loss especially at a time the state is still dealing with equally disturbing issues related with security challenges in the state.

’’May Allah grant us accelerated and lasting peace in Borno State and rest of Nigeria.’’ Jidda stated.

However, another version of the story had it that the three people were killed in an attempt by the insurgents to abduct the three emirs.

Another source who spoke on the condition of anonymity told Saturday Vanguard that the ‘‘gunmen opened fire on the

Sports Utility Vehicle, SUV, carrying the emirs, killing two policemen and Timta. “Some occupants of the vehicles escaped into the bush, but re-appeared after the Emir of Gwoza’s official vehicle was torched; along with several other vehicles in the convoys.

Late Emir’s body taken to Uba

“The body of the slain Emir has been conveyed to Uba through Biu-Damboa road, as the Limankara Bridge had been bombed on April 9, 2014 by insurgents, after the border community was attacked by the terrorists who set ablaze several houses, shops and vehicles,” the sources added.

The Defence Head-quarters and Northern States Governors Forum yesterday reacted angrily to the killing of the Emir of Gwoza in Borno State, Alhaji Idrissa Timta and two policemen by suspected members of Boko Haram terrorists yesterday. The Forum also condemned attempt on the lives of Emir of Uba, Alhaji Ismaila Mamza and his Askira counterpart, Alhaji Mai Abdullahi Ibn Muhammadu Askirama by the gunmen believed to be members of Boko Haram.

The Chairman of the Northern Governors Forum and governor of Niger Dr. Mua’zu Babangida Aliyu said in a statement signed by his Chief press secretary, Mr. Israel Ebije that the killing was a sad development.

Aliyu regretted that the attack was also, coming at a time the Federal Government had concluded plans to grant the Boko Haram sect amnesty.

“We call on the leadership and entire members of the Boko Haram sect to embrace the amnesty offer promised by President Goodluck Jonathan. Dialogue remains the best option for resolving issues. Whatever your agitations are, bring them to the dialogue table for discussion.”

He however, asked Nigerians not to lose faith in the country’s capability to overcome its security challenges just as he called on security agencies to ensure that those behind the dastardly act are punished.

“This is indeed a sad development for us as a region and the nation at large. This is happening at a time we are all doing our very best to rescue our over 200 secondary school girls abducted by the Islamist terror group- Boko Haram, from their school in Chibok, Borno state last month. We are particularly sad and worried about these ugly developments.

We are indeed sad over the killing of the Emir of Gwoza in the recent attack,” the governors added, and urged Nigerians, especially those living in areas considered flashpoints to remain calm and pursue their legitimate businesses as government would do everything possible to guarantee the safety of their lives and property.

Military recovers body, arrest 23 gunmen in North Central

The Defence Headquarters also said that it had recovered the body of the slain Emir as well as arrested 23 gunmen terrorising the the north central region.

It said that troops from the Special Task Force operating in the north-central part of the country arrested the suspects after raids in their hideouts on Jos South, Bukuru and Barkin Ladi areas.

But a statement confirming the killing of Emir Timta signed by the Director of Defence Information, Major General Chris Olukolade said, “A band of terrorists today (yesterday) attacked a convoy of the Emirs of Gwoza, Uba and Askira who were travelling to Gombe for the funeral of the late Emir of Gombe.

“Troops deployed in Garkida responded to the attack. The Emirs of Uba and Askira were secured while the body of the Emir of Gwoza who died in the attack has been recovered.

“Troops are currently on aggressive patrols along the entire route with a view to apprehending the perpetrators and keeping the area safe.”

In April, this year, Timta was quoted as saying, “our people have witnessed increased attacks with mass killings by the insurgents in the last four months. The attacks have crippled both social and economic lives in the entire area.

“It is sad to say that my people have been blocked from going to the market by the insurgents, who kill at will.

Even the food crops cultivated by them in the last farming season have ended up with the Boko Haram as the harvest were seized by the insurgents making life unbearable.

“There is an urgent need for the security agents to intensify and change their tactics of operation to stop the mass killings in this area.

“If care is not taken my people will completely flee the area to neighbouring states and countries for safety.”

Bio Data of Emir of Gwoza

The former Emir of Gwoza, Alhaji Shehu Mustapha Idrisa Timta, 72, was born in 1942 to the family of the Late Chief of Gwoza Alh. Idrisa Timta. Timta attended the Muslim Elementary School, Gwoza in 1948 and Senior Primary School Bama between 1952 and 1960. He attended the then Provincial Secondary School now Government College, Maiduguri between 1960 to 1964, before working briefly as a teacher in Gwoza. He later proceeded to the prestigious ABU, Zaria to study Sharia Law in 1968 and later HND in the same discipline in 1972.

Timta also worked with the then North – East judiciary in various capacities as an inspector of Area Courts and rose to the rank of Principal Inspector of Area Courts before his appointment as the third chief of Gwoza in October, 1981.

He was elevated to a second class Emir in 1987 before being promoted as a first class Emir in January, 2014, by Governor Kashim Shettima, because of his hard work and loyalty to the government. Left to mourn him are four wives, 28 children and many brothers and sisters among who are Alhaji Haruna Idrisa Timta, the former Head of Service, Borno State, Alhaji Adamu Idrisa Timta, a permanent secretary with the Borno State government, Alhaji Yusuf Timta, Secretary, Gwoza Local Government and Alhaji Umar Timta of the Department of Petroleum Resources, Maiduguri.

Others include Muhammad S. Timta, District Head of Hambagda, Isa Timta, Secretary of the Emirate Council, Lt. Abdulrazaq Timta of the Nigeria Army and Dr. Abubakar Timta.

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