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Ike Abonyi: "Boko Haram: Qaqa Discloses More Operational Clues"

The detained spokesman of Boko Haram, Abu Qaqa, Monday gave more insight into the operations and strategies of the group as he opened up on how they procured vehicles used for suicide bombing.

THISDAY source from the State Security Service (SSS) interrogation room revealed that most of the cars used for operation were usually snatched from owners.

"We snatch those vehicles at gun point. We use the less exotic ones for suicide bombings and just load vehicles with bombs, drive them near our target, park and get out of it and leave them to explode thereafter," he said.

According to him, exotic cars were retained by the group's leader, Abu Shekau, who always said he would sell them and put the money for the operation, which he usually fails to do.

Qaqa said the handling of the cars had helped to create disharmony in the group because of the partial distribution mostly in favour of the Kanuris.

"The leadership (Shekau) takes the expensive (exotic) ones always saying that he would arrange for them to be sold and the proceeds put into the Jihad. This is never done, anyway. Most of those vehicles end up with him and the Kanuri members of our sect. They use and pose in them to deceive security agents at check point. The distribution (utilisation) of these stolen vehicles on 'man-know-man', 'man-know-tribesman' became another source of anger and acrimony but you have to bear it or you die. Once you are in, you are in. If you attempt to leave, you are seen as a traitor who must die," he added.

"Before I was arrested some of us had already shown signs of tiredness," Qaqa confessed to his interrogators, while also acknowledging division in the group along ethnic lines as non-Kanuris were worried at the arrest of only their members.

He also explained the larger than life power of their leader, Imam Shekau, as he ordered the execution of any member who tried to back out. "Most of us were tired of fighting but we couldn't come out to say so because of fear of reprisal from Shekau on dissenting members. Several of our members that denounced the violent struggle were slaughtered in front of their wives and children. Seven were killed recently," he said.

THISDAY dependable intelligence source said that Qaqa disclosed that the non-Kanuris(Hausa, Fulani and others),

in the sect were worried at the trend of arrest of our members.. The worrying aspect was that most of our key members arrested were non-Kanuris which raised fears that there's sectional betrayal of members."

Abu Qaqa, 42, has variously used the names: Mohammed Shauibu, Mohammed Bello, Abu Tiamiya, and Abdulrahman Abdullahi. When he was set free after the Bauchi jail break by some of his members he adopted Abu Dardaa and ended up with Abu Qaqa until his arrest.

Qaqa was trailed to his hideout by a combined team of SSS and soldiers using the General Packet Radio Service (GPRS) used to track his telephone calls.

But the sect insisted that: "The person that was arrested was Abu Dardaa and not Abu Qaqa. I am Abul Qaqa, the spokesman for the Jama'atu Ahlis Sunnati Lidda'awati Wal Jihad. Abu Darda is the head of the Lagina (Dept) of public enlightenment and not the spokesman."

He claimed that arrested sect leader was detailed to discuss the government proposal to discuss with them arguing that his eventual arrest has demonstrated government's insincerity with the proposals.

"The arrest of Abu Darda is an outright deception and betrayal by the Nigerian government and security agents. They proclaimed dialogue and are doing the opposite. His arrest has proved to us that they were waiting for us to avail ourselves so that they can arrest us.

"We purposely sent Abu Dardaa to Kaduna to discuss with some key government functionaries on the issue of dialogue. Indeed, he had started talking to them but unknown to him, they (had) directed some security agents to trail him and arrest him.

"This is exactly what happened. He volunteered to present himself for the dialogue but was betrayed. Everybody knows our capability and tactics of operation. It is evidently clear that none of our members could be caught on a platter of gold and without confrontation."