



By: TA | AP Brief

Islamic State group leader was killed in a joint US-Nigerian mission



U.S. and Nigerian forces killed a leader of the Islamic State group in Nigeria in a mission carried out Friday, U.S. President Donald Trump said.

Trump announced the joint operation in Africa's most populous country in a late-night social media post that offered few details.

He said Abu Bakr al-Mainuki was second in command of the Islamic State group globally and "thought he could hide in Africa, but little did he know we had sources who kept us informed on what he was doing."

Al-Mainuki was viewed as the key figure in IS organizing and finance, and had been plotting attacks against the United States and its interests, according to an official who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to share sensitive information.

Nigerian President Bola Tinubu confirmed the operation and said Al-Mainuki was killed alongside "several of his lieutenants, during a strike on his compound in the Lake Chad Basin."

Born in Nigeria's Borno province in 1982, al-Mainuki took the helm of the IS branch in West Africa after the group's previous leader in the region, Mamman Nur, was killed in 2018, according to the Counter Extremism Project, which tracks militant groups.

Al-Mainuki was based in the Sahel area, the monitoring group said, adding that it is believed that he fought in Libya when IS was active in the North African nation more than a decade ago. He was sanctioned by the U.S. in 2023.

Multifaceted security crisis

Trump in December directed U.S. forces to launch **strikes against the Islamic State group** in Nigeria, though he released little detail then about the impact.

Nigeria has been battling multiple armed groups, including at least two affiliated with IS,

as it has grappled with a multifaceted security crisis.

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The U.S. in February **sent troops** to the West African nation to help advise its military and in March, the U.S. also **deployed drones** there after Trump alleged that **Christians** are being targeted in Nigeria's security crisis.

The Friday night operation was the latest instance in a string of covert missions abroad that Trump has announced this year, starting with the stunning overnight raid in January to capture and remove Venezuela's then-leader Nicolás Maduro and whisk him to the U.S., followed nearly two months later by the launch of strikes that kicked off the war with Iran.