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Prominent Muslim cleric shot dead in Sokoto



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Written by Abdulfatai Abdulsalami

Friday, 20 July 2007

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Prominent Muslim cleric shot dead in Sokoto
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Sporadic clashes broke out in Sokoto yesterday following the death of prominent Islamic preacher Sheikh Umaru Hamza Dan Maishi'a,

Sporadic clashes broke out in Sokoto yesterday following the death of prominent Islamic preacher Sheikh Umaru Hamza Dan Maishi'a, who was shot by yet-to-be identified assailants on Wednesday evening. He was buried at the Hubbaren Shehu early yesterday at a funeral ceremony attended by thousands of people, many of them shedding tears. At least two houses said to be owned by leaders of the Shi'a sect were burnt and several people were wounded in the clashes.

Acting Governor of Sokoto State Alhaji Mukhtari Shehu Shagari had earlier announced the cleric's death at the Sultan's Palace in Sokoto, where he held a joint press conference with the Sultan, Alhaji Muhammadu Sa'ad. The two leaders appealed to the people not to take the law into their own hands and to give the police time to fish out the culprits.

State Police Commissioner Alhaji Shehu Othman, who spoke to reporters in his office, confirmed the killing and gave some details of what happened. Sheikh Umaru, a Sunni cleric known for his virulent opposition to Sokoto's small Shi'a Muslim sect, was preaching at the Shehu Danfodiyo Mosque, two kilometres away from the Sultan's palace, when some assailants attacked him and shot him in the forehead. The Sheikh's supporters apprehended one of the suspected assailants and lynched him.

The Sheikh himself was immediately rushed to the Usmanu Danfodiyo University Teaching Hospital in Sokoto. He survived for several hours, but it was confirmed in the morning that he died.

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In the News

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