

# Gunmen kill cleric, two more in Maiduguri

From Sharafa Dauda, Maiduguri

Unknown motorcycle riding gunmen have again killed three persons in Borno State. Sheikh Bashir Mustapha, a Sunni Islamic scholar was shot yesterday in his house at Layin Gidan Hajiya mai Tuwon Yasin in Gwange Ward of Maiduguri along with one of his pupils, Alhaji Modu Sunoma. The third, one Mamman Zannah, a senior council staff of Bama local government area was shot on Thursday at his 'New York' residence in Bama Town.

Eyewitnesses told our correspondent that Sheikh Mustapha and Alhaji Sunoma were attacked around 11am by two assailants who walked into his house, pretending to be visitors. "The two men rode on a motorcycle and stopped in front of the house. The one who wore a kaftan entered the house and then called the other who was on the motorcycle on phone. It was after he entered that

we heard gunshots," an eyewitness said.

Sunday Trust learnt that two suspicious persons were sighted in a vehicle by the corner while another stood at the other end of the road. One suspicious person was said to have left a wedding gathering adjacent to the scene on a motorcycle as the assailants arrived. The one who wore kaftan was said to have fired repeatedly in the air with an AK 47 rifle as they all left.

The Bama council chief was said to have been attacked by four gunmen riding on two motorcycles at his residence after the evening prayers around 8.25pm while in company of friends and neighbours, riddling his chest and forehead with bullets barely 24 hours after some other motorcycle riding gunmen killed an All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP) chieftain, Alhaji Awana Ali Ngala, in his living room while two other motorcyclists injured police sergeant Isa Omale who was on duty at the residence of the

Speaker of the Borno State House of Assembly before taking away his AK-47 rifle.

The Borno Police Commissioner, Ibrahim Abdu, confirmed the killings, but said, "today's (Saturday's) attacks and killings by the suspected armed sect, is, however, taking a different dimension, because one of the renowned Islamic cleric, Sheikh Mustapha was killed."

Governor Ali Modu Sheriff was in tears when he visited the scene few minutes after the incident along with the 21 Brigade Commander of the Nigerian Army, Brigadier General Ibrahim Hassan Ndaliman.

The recent killings are persisting despite the stop and search operations by combined team of security men and the ban on motorcycle operations from 6pm to 7am to curb the attacks that have so far claimed the lives of six police officers, nine civilians (amongst them a ward head and an Islamic scholar) and left four others injured.