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Nigeria: How Gunmen Killed Sokoto Islamic Cleric

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BY RAKIYA A. MUHAMMAD, 5 SEPTEMBER 2012

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Sokot — Family members of Malam Liman Danda Birkitawa killed in Sokoto last Saturday by unknown gunmen yesterday explained how the incident happened. The cleric, aged 74 years, was shot dead at Birkitawa village in Dange Shuni local government area of Sokoto State last Saturday by gunmen who stormed the village in two motorbikes.

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Two other victims of the attack who are family members of the deceased sustained gunshot wounds, it was gathered. Liman Birkitawa was said to have been shot in the chest.

Speaking on the incident, Alhaji Bello Liman Danda, one of the children of the deceased, said he had just returned from an errand for his father but was waiting for him to perform his evening prayers and break his fast when he heard gunshots.

Bello said he was outside the house when he heard the gunshots and so he immediately ran to hide at the nearby mosque.

Witnesses said the assailants did not take anything, and one of them was heard telling the cleric that they were sent to kill him.

Also speaking, the deceased's younger brother, Alhaji Altine Birkitawa, said his brother was neither a politician nor a businessman and wondered what warranted his killing, saying they were not aware of any quarrels he had with anyone and that they were not suspecting anybody.

Daily Trust learnt that Birkitawa only used to go to his farm and come back home on daily basis and in the last eight years he had not left the village. According to some residents of the village, a number of people used to go to him for prayer assistance.

He is survived by four wives and seven children.

When contacted, Police Public Relations Officer DSP Salisu Sani confirmed the incident, saying the police had received a report of the incident and investigations had just begun.

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