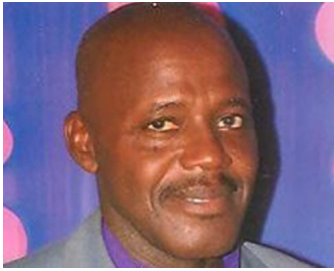


Director shot at govt house dies

Written by Sunday Isuwa, Kaduna
Monday, 20 February 2012 05:03



The Kaduna State official who was shot at the Government House on Monday when he failed to stop for security checks has died.

Pastor Isuwa Kiforo, who was the director for Finance and Administration at the Ministry of Information, died in the early hours of yesterday at the 44 Army Reference Hospital in Kaduna where he had been receiving treatment since the shooting, authorities said.

Kiforo was reported to have been shot in the leg and in the abdomen when he failed to stop for routine security checks at the gate of the Government House.

Security men guarding the premises opened fire at his Toyota car when he drove “dangerously in a suspicious manner towards the Government House gate,” the state police commissioner had said.

Yesterday, the Kaduna State Information commissioner Saidu Adamu described Kiforo’s death as shocking.

He said the late director was hard working, and that the ministry and the state government would miss his services.

“We are mourning our director because it is very painful experience to us but God knows better,” he said.

Sympathisers, who trooped to the hospital, described Kiforo’s death as unfortunate.

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At the deceased's residence at 7, Abba Rimi Road, Narayi, sympathisers were seen coming in to condole with the family.

The shooting of Kiforo last week was apparently caused by Boko Haram hysteria that gripped Kaduna since the previous week when two bomb-laden cars forced their way into the headquarters of the 1 Mechanised Division of the Nigerian Army. The sect had claimed responsibility for the botched attack.

Shortly after the incident last Monday, witnesses described how Kiforo beat the security checks.

"(All) cars going in and out of the Government House are subjected to security checks. Unfortunately, when we attempted to check that man's car, he zoomed off. We had no option but to open fire," a security officer said.

Kaduna State Commissioner of Police, Ballah M. Nasarawa, in a statement on the day of the shooting, said, "A combined team of security personnel attached to Government House main gate, Kaduna, intercepted a Toyota Corolla, Salon Car, maroon in colour, with Kaduna State Government official registration number Kaduna, KD-06-A 04. The driver drove dangerously in a suspicious manner towards the Government House gate. The security personnel stopped the lone occupant, instead of stopping, he forced himself through the exit gate and found his way into the Government House.

"The suspect was later identified as Pastor Isuwa Kiforo 'M' of No. 7 Abba Rimi Road, Narayi Kaduna, who is a Director, Finance and Administration, Ministry of Information, Kaduna State.

"The vehicle was thoroughly searched in my presence by our anti-bomb disposal experts and nothing incriminating was recovered," Nasarawa said.

But earlier in the day, Reuters news agency quoted Governor Patrick Yakowa's spokesperson, Reuben Buhari, as saying that the man was a bomber who tried to ram a car packed with explosives through the gates of the Government House but was shot in the legs while trying to flee.

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On Tuesday, Buhari refuted the Reuters report, saying he never spoke to the news agency.

The late Kiforo's son also commented after the incident, saying his father could not have beaten security checks because he was a disciplined person.

"My father cannot be involved in such a thing because he is a highly disciplined person. He is very religious and always very close to God. Therefore, none of the family members will believe that he can do a thing like that. We believe what happened was just an accident.

"We don't also believe that he can do anything that can cause embarrassment to Yakowa because during our daily morning devotions, he usually asks us to pray for Yakowa, especially to be protected from the Boko Haram. As you can see our house is dotted with pictures of Yakowa's executive.

"My father spends most of his time in the Church. This is why most people don't even know that he is a civil servant and they address him as Pastor," he said.