

POLICEMAN KILLS 'CIVILIAN JTF' MEMBER IN MAIDUGURI

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Written by Hamza Kdris, Yahaya Ibrahim & Ibrahim Saw ab, Maiduguri Hits: 128

A policeman yesterday allegedly shot dead a member of the Borno youth vigilante, popularly known as Civilian JTF, along the Kano-Damaturu road in Maiduguri.

The incident caused traffic gridlock along the road, as youth vigilante took to the streets in protest over the alleged killing of their colleague.

The youths also barricaded all the roads in the area and set bonfires, with many of them calling for the complete withdrawal of policemen from the streets of Maiduguri, who they accused of triggering the Boko Haram in 2009.

Witnesses said shortly after the killing of their member, the vigilante attacked the policeman with knives and daggers, inflicting serious injuries on his body.

Also, the angry youths blocked the convoy of Governor Kashim Shettima, the police commissioner, Lawan Tanko and many traditional rulers as well as government officials who were returning from the Maiduguri Airport after the flagging-off of pilgrims' airlift to Saudi Arabia for 2013 hajj by Vice President Namadi Sambo.

Shettima, who addressed the angry youth at the Government House, said he was "deeply saddened" by the incident and extended his condolences to the leadership of the vigilante and the family of the deceased. He promised to donate N3.5 million to the family of the deceased and to personally attend his burial.

"We are going to do everything possible to regain the confidence of the youths. They have done a lot in restoring peace to the state. I also wish to appeal to the youth not to destroy the emerging peace they endlessly help in building," he said.

On what led to the fracas, some members of the vigilante who spoke to newsmen alleged that they were returning from Benishiek in Kaga local government area where they had arrested some suspected Boko Haram members and were about to hand them over to the military at a checkpoint in Maiduguri, when some policemen stopped them.

"The incident happened close to a military checkpoint, opposite the Borno Express Transport when they were confronted by three policemen who accused them of violating traffic law," a vigilante member who identified himself as Kabiru, said.

"In the ensuing argument, one of the policemen threatened to shoot one of our members (the deceased) but the member, out of anger dared the policeman to shoot. Foolishly, the policeman instantly confirmed his threat by pulling the trigger," he said.

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