

Ex-Defence Chief, Badeh killed in ambush

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Late Alex Badeh

A former Chief of Defence Staff, Air Chief Marshal Alex Badeh (Rtd) was shot dead yesterday in an ambush along Keffi – Bade road in Nasarawa State.

The Director of Public Relations and Information, Nigerian Air Force, Air Commodore Ibikunle Daramola confirmed the incident in a statement last night.

“It is with a heavy heart that I regretfully announce the unfortunate demise of former Chief of Defence Staff, Air Chief Marshal Alex Sabundu Badeh, who died today (yesterday) 18 Dec 18, from gunshot wounds sustained when his vehicle was attacked while returning from his farm along Abuja-Keffi Road.

“On behalf of officers, airmen and airwomen of the Nigerian Air Force, the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Sadique Abubakar, commiserates with the family of the late former Chief of Defence Staff over this irreparable loss.

“We pray that the Almighty God grants his soul eternal rest,” the statement said.

A top security source confided in Daily Trust last night that Badeh (61) was travelling on Keffi- Bade village alongside his security detail when some unknown gunmen opened fire, killing the former CDS while some of his aides were badly wounded.

Daily Trust could not establish if it was a targeted killing or not, but the source said Bade’s security aides engaged the assailants in a gun duel for some minutes.

“The former CDS was waylaid near a village called Gitata along Keffi-Bade road and he died at the spot from his gunshot wounds,” the source said.

“There was reinforcement from a military facility along the route and his remains have been recovered and taken to Abuja,” the source added.

Born on January 10, 1957, the late Bade is a retired four star flag officer of the Nigerian Air force who served as the 18th Chief of Air Staff (October 4, 2012 – January 16, 2014) and the 15th Chief of Defence Staff of the armed forces of Nigeria (January 16, 2014 to July 13, 2015).

He was born in Vimtim, a little town in Mubi Local Government Area of Adamawa State, and attended Vimtim Primary School, and thereafter went on to obtain his School Certificate from Villanova Secondary School in 1976 before proceeding to the Nigerian Defence Academy as a member of the 21 Regular Course on 3 January 1977.

He was commissioned Pilot Officer on 3 July 1979 and commenced his flying career at the 301 Flying Training School on the Bulldog Primary Trainer aircraft in 1979.

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Between 1981 and 1982, he attended the Undergraduate Pilot Training at Vance Air Force Base in the United States Air Force. He was at the 301 Flying Training School (FTS) as a squadron pilot and later became an instructor pilot on the Bull Dog and DO-228 aircraft.

Badeh who served in the Air Force for 38 years attended the junior staff course at Armed Forces Command and Staff College in 1988. Between 1995 and 1996 he attended the senior staff course at same institution. In 2005 he was at the National War College Nigeria as a member of Course 14 and graduated in August 2006. The Air Marshal holds an M.Sc. degree in Strategic Studies from the University of Ibadan.

Alex Badeh was Commander of the Presidential Fleet, during the Olusegun Obasanjo's presidency. And later as Chief of Air Staff Badeh initiated Optimizing Local Engineering (OLE 1 and 2) to focus on developing indigenous Unarmed Aerial Vehicle (UAV) and other weapon systems.

Trial

Until his death, Mr. Badeh was standing trial before Justice Okon Abang of a Federal High Court, sitting in Abuja for alleged fraud, relating to the diversion of N3.9 billion meant for the purchase of arms for the Nigerian military.

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC accused Mr. Badeh, of using funds assigned to the Nigerian Air Force to purchase a mansion in Abuja. The commission said the purchase was done with the dollar equivalent of N1.4 billion.

“Mr. Badeh, while being the CDS, among other things between January and December, 2013, allegedly used dollar equivalent of the sum of N1.4billion (One Billion, One Hundred Million Naira) removed from the accounts of the Nigerian Air Force to purchase a mansion situated at No. 6, Ogun River Street, Off Danube Street, Maitama, Abuja,” the EFCC said in a statement at the time.

He denied involvement in any misconduct.