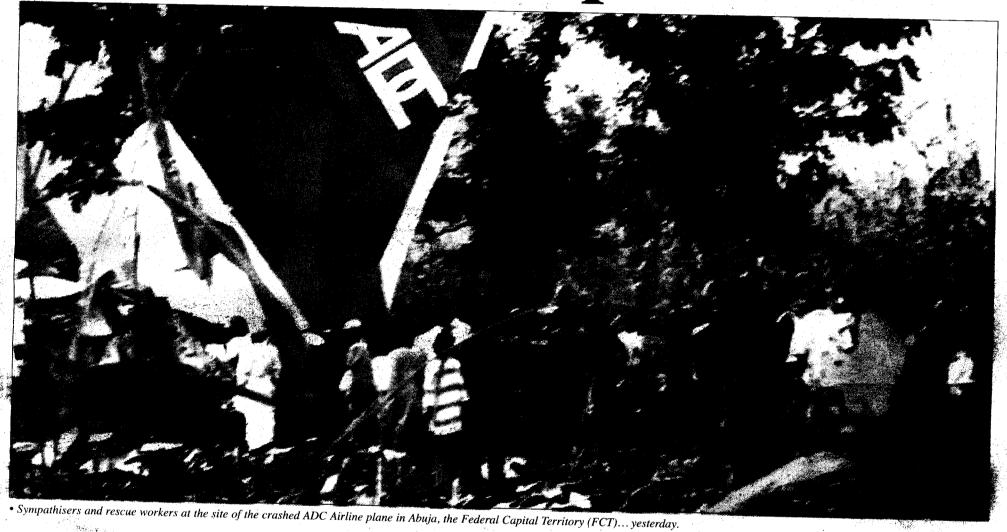
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MONDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2006

Sultan Maccido, Senator son, 96 others die in plane crash



NIGERIA was once again thrown into deep mourning yesterday as a passenger aircraft belonging to the Aviation Development Company (ADC) crashed shortly after take-off from the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja.

Of the 100 passengers and five crew members on board, only seven persoms were reported to

More on Pages 2 - 5, 8, 9, 13 & 14

have survived the crash. The dead included the Sultan of Sokoto and President General of Nigeria's Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, Alhaji Muhammadu Maccido; Sokoto State Deputy Governor, Alhaji Garba Mohammed; two Senators, Sule Yari Gandi and Badamasi Maccido, who was also the Sultan's son and another grandson and four children of the same parents, with sur-

name as Abdurahaman. The others included a Manager in Equitorial Trust Bank in Sokoto State, Mr. O.H. Irabor, a son of Second Republic

- Sultan's son, grandson in 'flight of death'
- Sultan buried amid tears
- Senator Gandi, mother, wife, three kids die
- Shehu Shagari loses son, Abdulrahman
- Kogi gov's three daughters, four others survive



• Sultan Maccido

President Shehu Shagari, Abdulrahman; and a Deputy Commissioner of Police in Lagos State, Lawal M.A.

For Senator Gandi's family, it was even a tragedy of unbelievable proportions: his mother, his wife and three children were on board and



Senator Maccido

 Senator Gandi From Martins Oloja and Madu Onuorah (Abuja), Isa Abdulsalami (Jos), Saxone Akhaine (Kaduna) and Eric Meya (Sokoto)

> died with him. Three daughters of Kogi State Governor, Ibrahim Idris, survived. So also is another son of the late Badamasi Maccido, as

well as Messrs Bello Jabo and Peter Onuka. The identity of the seventh person was not ascertained as at last



• Alhaji Yaro

The Kogi governor's daughter's names were given as Jemila, Aisha and Hajiya.

The plane, a Boeing 737, crashed at the Ido, Tunga-Madaki village, just two kilometres from the airport.

Yesterday's mishap came barely a week to

the tenth anniversary of the heart rending crash involving the same ADC airline in Ejirin, Lagos in November 1996. One of the witnesses of the evacuation told *The Guardian* last night that it was a sight too gory to be repeated in a lifetime.

President Olusegun Obsanjo, from his Ota, Ogun State residence, yesterday expressed "deep" and "profound" shock at the incident. He ordered three days of national mourning and a full investigation of the

cause of the crash. Sokoto was thrown into mourning as news of the death of the Sultan and several other prominent citizens of the state was

received. Born in 1926, in Dange town, some 26 kilometres from Sokoto town, Sultan PHOTO: ABAYOMI FAYESE

Maccido was the eldest son of his father, the late 17th Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Abubakar Siddiq

He became the 19th Sultan of Sokoto in 1996 fol-lowing the deposition of the 18th Sultan, Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki.

He was buried yesterday at Hubbaren Shehu (The tomb of Shehu Usman Danfodio).

The late Sultan's body was flown in a presidential plane to Sokoto for the burial. At the burial were Second Republic President Shehu Shagari, Sokoto State Governor Attahiru Bafarawa, his Kebbi State counterpart, Adamu Aliero, and Emir of Argungu, Samaila Mera.

His remains were airlifted to Sokoto at 6.45 p.m. Senior Special Assistant to the President (Media). Mrs. Oluremi Oyo, said that the President "was in a state of grief." He also sympathised with the bereaved and all Nigeri-

The crash site is located south of the Presidential Wing of the airport and straight from the runway, just before the hills over-

Continued on Page 4

ADC AIR CRASH

Sokoto deputy gov dies after seven months in office

DEATH in a plane crash yesterday ended the tenure of Alhaji Garba Muhammed as the deputy governor of Sokoto State.

He was just seven months in office as he was sworn in on March 15, 2006 after the resignation of Alhaji Magatakarda Wamakko from the office.

El-Rufai blames weather, age, for crash

From Florence Oretade, <u>Abuja</u>

THE Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Mallam Nasir el-Rufai, has described yesterday plane crash as "unfortunate."

Although El-Rufai declined further com-ments, on the ground that it was too early to say the cause of the disaster, he, however volunteered:

I have been told that the weather was bad. The plane from what I have seen looked ageing and the tyres were not that good".

Senator Florence Ita-Giwa, who was at the site of the crash, said it was too grievous for the country at this time.

According to her, too many Nigerian dignitaries have been lost to plane crashes within a short space of time.

"I have lost my colleagues, their wives and children. This is too devasBy Clifford Ndujihe

Before then, he was the state's commissioner for Finance

Governor Attahiru Bafarawa said he appointed the late Muhammad as his deputy because of his remarkable achievements

as a public servant. His words: "Indeed, what guided me in appointing Alhaji Garba Muhammad into the position were his virtues of honesty, discipline, loyalty and maturity. In the last seven years that I had worked with him as the Commissioner of Finance, I have never found him wanting in dis-charging his duties.

In fact, the remarkable diligence and trustworthiness of the new deputy governor had given me greater confidence that in what remains of our tenure, we shall insha-Allah not have crisis of confidence, which had seriously attempted to rupture our collective efforts in moving the machinery of governance. I, therefore, have full optimism that the new appointee will continue to exhibit these worthy traits and commitment for the glory of our dear state,

In addition to his responsibility, as deputy governor, Muhammad continued to oversee the finance ministry "to ensure continuity and sustenance of the efficiency and transparency in the management of state



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Ben Obi mourns, airport official claims non-clearance of flight

PILOTS of the ill-fated flight may not have received the nod of the airport authorities for the trip, sources said.

At the Nnamdi Azikiwe Airport, officials queried why the pilots took off when they only asked for permission to taxi to the holding position.

For Senator Ben Obi, it was lamentation all through because of the presence of two of his colleagues in the crashed ADC aircraft.

Obi was particularly pained that as he was stepping off the plane that brought him to the local wing of the Abuja Airport, he saw Sule Yari Gandi, shook hands with him as they both planned to meet during the week. That

Continued from Page 1

The aircraft had arrived

from Lagos and after its

Abuja passengers disembarked, at 10.29 a.m., took off for the flight to Sokoto

in a turbulent weather con-

dition. The aircraft took off

by 10.29 a.m., only to veer off its normal route and

started a descent and

crashed five minutes later.

From the perimeter fences by the two sides of

the international wing of

the airport, which is the operational crisis centre

for the crash, security, hos-

pital and other operational

vehicles, including ambu-

lances can be seen moving

seen from the southern-most side of the Presiden-

tial wing, with the vehicles

seen closer as they moved

By 3.10 p.m., the Federal

Fire Service was still using

its hose to douse fire which

continued to billow and

was still noticed from the

distance. By 3.15 p.m., the fire was finally put out.

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in and out.

looking the airport.

Alifa Daniel, Betrand

meeting may hold but Gandi will not part of it.

Nwankwo, Abuja

As Obi mourned his colleagues, there were indications that it was not only Senator Badamasi Maccido that had his family members with him at the airport before the flight. Senator Gandi came to the airport with his mother and wife.

An airport official said that when the rainstorm was threatening, the three airlines on ground were advised not to fly.

He said: "They were warned not to take off

helicopter which has been

moving from the site to the airport took off. It landed

minutes later opposite the

fire house at the interna-

tional wing of the airport

with some rescue officials.

By 4.10 p.m., a truck belonging to the construc-

tion firm, Julius Berger,

carrying an earth excavator

drove into the operational

entrance of the airport cri-

Thereafter, a security offi-

cial, who had been part of the rescue effort, came out

from the lounge of the air-

port. He was distinct in his

shoes and the bottom side

of the trousers drenched in

Speaking under anonymi-

the crash site, he told The

Guardian: "It is a horrible

site. It is a horrible site,"

shaking his head as he

entered his car and drove

At the perimeter fences of

the airport, sympathisers stood by the wired fences,

exchanging information on

ordered a full investigation

President Obasanjo has

the incident.

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on his impressions of

sis centre.

mud.

because of the weather. They were advised to wait for 10 minutes at least to see the weather. The ADC pilot sought clearance to proceed to the holding position and it was granted, while the other two maintained their position. The ADC flight took off even though he only asked to go to holding position.'

There was no one to tell the pilot's side of the story as he was feared to have died in the crash.

Meanwhile, the Director-General of Accident Investigation and Prevention Bureau in the Ministry of Aviation, Dr. Angus Ozoka, said President Olusegun Obasanjo

Mrs. Oyo had shortly after the incident stated

that "President Olusegun

Obasanjo is deeply and

profoundly shocked and

saddened. He is in a state

of grief over this crash of

an airline in the environs

"The President has ordered

a full report to be made available to him. He has

also ordered an investiga-

tion into the crash. He is profoundly saddened, and

he condoles with all Nige-

rians because all of us are

touched when this kind of

thing happens and espe-cially the families of those

who may have been on

Prominent northern lead-

ers, including the former governors of Kaduna

State, Balarabe Musa and

Lawal Kaita, expressed

Musa said that it was

unfortunate that another

aviation accident occurred

only about a month after

some Army Generals and

other senior military offi-cers died in similar cir-

The former governor, who noted that ordinarily

there was nothing unusual

about air mishaps since

they happen even in

advanced countries," how-ever described as "baf-

fling," the frequency of the

He queried: "Is it just a co-incidence that after a

month, when some senior

military men died in simi-

lar circumstances another

one has happened now?

We should pray for the repose of the souls of those

who died and may Allah grant them Allujjannah

(space in heaven).

crashes in Nigeria.

cumstances.

shock over the mishap.

board the airline.'

Her statement added:

of the federal capital.

has ordered immediate investigation into the acci-

Ozoka said there would be an emergency meeting with the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Sunday Ehindero today on the incident.

On the cause of the crash, an airport official at the Nnamdi Azikiwe airport said that the cause could be traced to the pilot and bad weather.

The Guardian learnt that both Virgin Nigeria, ADC and another other airlines were supposed to take-off that same period. Pilots of Virgin Nigeria and that of the other airline reportedly headed the advice, the pilot of the ill-fated ADC airline ignored the advice and took-off.

Sultan Maccido, son, others die in crash prayed that God should

Alhaji

He said: "We are not happy about these occurrences and this shows that the government is not serious over its aviation sector, because they cannot tell us that solution could not be

governor of Plateau State, Chief Solomon Lar, expressed sincere condolences to Nigerians and the people of Sokoto State

He condoled with the emirate council over the death of the Sultan. Lar spoke yesterday when he received the National Chairman of the Interim Management Committee of a faction of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Ibrahim Iro-Safana and his team who paid him a soli-

Kaita told The Guardian: "We are dumb-founded that another air crash has happened again. This is a bad omen for our country and we have to pray against this unfortunate development." He continued:

death of the Sultan of Sokoto and other Nigerians in the crash, is a heavy blow to us. This is a great loss to Nigeria" Kaita urged the Federal

Government to immediately institute a high-level probe into the incident in to establish its

He advised the government to come out with a policy that would ensure that out-dated planes do not operate in the nation's air space.

Kaita, who sympathised with the families of the victims of the crash. grant them the strength to overcome the grief and

The leader of the youth wing of the Northern Union (NU), Malam Mohammed Yakubu, expressed disappointment over the high incidence of plane crashes in the country in recent times.

found to the problem."

Also, the first civilian

over the plane crash.

darity visit.

Lar said he had just condoled with the Governor of Sokoto State on phone, adding that he also learnt former President Shehu Shagari's son was also a victim of the crash. Niger State Governor Abdulkadir Abdullahi Kure was among mourners at the crash site yesterday in Tunga Madaki village Abuja. In an interview with *The Guardian* last night, he said: "Apart from the loss of the Sultan of Sokoto, the head of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs in Nigeria, I also lost a very good friend, Sir Chief Cyprian Nwaeze, managing director/CEO of News Engineering Nigeria Limited, a foremost electrical engiing company in Abuja

and the North."
He added: "We were together two days ago. We went to Umuahia together on Friday. He was going to Sokoto to return on Wednesday. But God decided otherwise. That is where Allah is sovereign.

Kure continued: will miss the Sultan. He was a great man, a man of peace and wisdom."

The late Nwaeze was resident in Minna from where he was co-ordinating his business. He had an imposing "News Engineering" Building along Her-bert Macaulay Way Abuja.

Obasanio orders probe of crash

PRESIDENT Olusegun Obasanjo has ordered immediate probe into the crash of an ADC aircraft in Abuja at the weekend.

The Special Adviser to the President on Media and Publicity, Mrs. Remi Ojo said President Obasanjo was "deeply and profoundly shocked and saddened... He offered condolences to all Nigerians, especially family, friends and associates of those who may have been on board.

The ADC aircraft carrying 104 people, including the country's Moslem spiritual leader, crashed yesterday shortly after taking off from Abuja airport. At least six people survived, a TV station said.

The Boeing 727 was carrying 104 passengers and crew members, state radio reported, citing Rowland Iyayi, head of the National Air Space Management Agency (NAMA).

The radio said the flight was en route to the North West city of Sokoto and no survivors had been found. But Channels Television reported later that at least six people survived.

Among the passengers was the Sultan of Sokoto, Muhammadu Maccido, who is the spiritual leader of Nigeria's Moslems, according to Mustapha Shehu, spokesman for the Sokoto state government.

The clam-up on crash news...

OURNALISTS had a tough time getting information on yesterday's plane crash as neither the ADC Airlines nor the Federal Aviation Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) was forthcoming with information. It was the same story at the Nigerian Aviation Management Agency (NAMA) office.

Journalists and other anx-Nigerians 'tossed' from desk to desk by officers of these agencies who eventually disappeared outright.
The trickles of the news

came only from crash victims or those close to their families or colleagues. Getting to the crash site was also a journalist's nightmare.

This is because of the location of the crash site. It is between the airport perimeter fences and the hills overlooking the air-

The only access is through the footpath from nearby village. But the area was cordoned off by security agents. So, it was very difficult for journalists to slip through.

Even the few who got close to the sight became "guests" of the security details on sight. A journalist and camera-

man of an independent television station who both arrived the crash site onboard an ambulance were promptly put under protective watch to ensure they didn't lift the camera to film the proceedings at the crash site. They were later told to go later in the evening when the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) had started live broadcast of the plane

At 3.17 p.m., a helicopter belonging to the National into the crash. The President also direct-Emergency Management ed that the full report of the investigation be made Agency (NEMA) took off from the airport. Another available to him. CARS/LAPTOPS FORSALE Almost Brand New Toyota Corolla 2005 Model. American Spec. Mileage 8000km. (Price; 2.4m Negotiable) Almost Brand New Mazda Tribute SUV 2004 Model . American Spec Mileage 11500km. (Price: 3.5m Neg.) Dell Ispiron 1300, P(m), 40GB, 1.7GHz, 512MB, 17" TFT Screen, WXPH, DVD-ROM. (Price: N160,000,00) <u>CONTACT:</u> Femi: 08054759374, 01-8512988 **FOR SALE SOLAR MODULES+COMPONENTS** Caterpillar* • • • your solar power provider <u>We have in stock;</u> Preferred for better Mono-crystalline solar modules, Isofolon, Siemens & Solon Types (i.e 75Wp, 80Wp. 110Wp, 55Wp, etc) European made Pure Sinewave inverters •