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Friday, April 10, 2009

Police sergeant kills colleague at checkpoint

From Abiodun Fagbemi, Ilorin

TRAGEDY struck at the Kwara State Police Command yesterday when a police sergeant shot to death a colleague of same rank at Ganmo along Ajase Ipo/Ilorin Road.

The slain police officer was said to have been mistaken for a hit-and-run driver by his killer, who was attached to the patrol team of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC).

The Guardian learnt that the victim was driving a red-painted Toyota car and declined to slow down at a checkpoint mounted by the joint team.

The sergeant allegedly fired a shot, aiming at one of the tyres of the officer's vehicle but the bullet hit him and he died on the spot.

A police source said the deceased had probably thought that his colleagues had sighted him, hence he did not stop at the checkpoint.

"But the sergeant who shot him would not just fold his arm and had to open fire in the process. Do not forget that only last week, a hit-and-run driver hit one of the men of the State Anti Robbery Squad (SARS), leaving him with a compound fracture on his leg. I think the memory of what happened quickly came to his (sergeant) mind.

"It was quite unfortunate. When they moved closer, they discovered that the victim was a police sergeant in the same command. He was not in uniform though," the source claimed.

There was, however, speculation in 'Offa Garage' that a policeman had killed a middle-aged man in his

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Another rumour linked the deceased to a commercial vehicle driver plying the route. In the process, his colleagues were said to have mobilised for a face-off with the police in the area.

Ironically, the Police Command was said to have promptly sent a detachment of its men to the scene to apparently "rescue" their colleagues said to have been held by a mob.

The incident led to a heavy traffic on the road, forcing motorists to move at a snail speed. Traders at the weekly Ganmo Market hurriedly closed their shops while those by the roadside ran for safety.

When The Guardian visited the scene at 1.00 p.m., the body of the deceased was said to have been deposited at the University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital (UITH) mortuary while his car was towed to the Ganmo Police Post.

Reacting to the development, the command's Spokesman, Mr. Alao AbdulAziz, said he could not speak on the "sad issue" because he had not received any clearance from the Police Commissioner, Mr. Donald Iroham. The trigger-happy policeman has been detained at the police headquarters in Ilorin.

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