

# Buhari, military mourn Attahiru, others

By Terhemba Daka and  
Kanayo Umeh (Abuja)  
Saxone Akhaine and  
AbdulGaniyu Alabi  
(Kaduna) and Odita  
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A picture taken on January 29, 2021 show Nigerian Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General Ibrahim Attahiru. – Nigeria's top-ranking army commander General Ibrahim Attahiru was killed on May 21, 2021 when his plane crashed in the country's north, an air force spokesman said. Attahiru was appointed by President Muhammadu Buhari in January in a shakeup of the top military command to better fight surging violence and a more than decade-long jihadist insurgency. (Photo by KOLA SULAIMON / AFP)



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The Nigeria Armed Forces, yesterday, lost the Chief of Army Staff, Lt. Gen. Ibrahim Attahiru and 10 others in an air mishap in Kaduna State.

Acting Director of Defence Information, Brig. Gen. Onyema Nwachukwu, who confirmed the unfortunate incident in a press release, said the mishap occurred after landing at the Kaduna International Airport due to inclement weather.

President Muhammadu Buhari has expressed shock over the incident and condoled with families of the deceased, the military and Nigerians in general.

In the Army statement titled, 'Armed Forces Of Nigeria Loses Chief Of Army Staff And 10 Others In Air Mishap', Nwachukwu said the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), Gen. Lucky Irabor, has ordered an investigation into the incident.

The statement read: "It is with a heavy heart that the Armed Forces of Nigeria (AFN) regrets to announce that this evening at about 1800 hours, the Chief of Army Staff, Lt. Gen. Ibrahim Attahiru in the company of his entourage, who was on an official trip from Abuja to Kaduna, were involved in an air mishap.

"The unfortunate incident occurred after landing at the Kaduna International Airport due to inclement weather. The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen. Lucky Irabor has therefore directed that an Accident Investigation Board be constituted to unravel the immediate and remote cause(s) of the unfortunate accident.



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“As we pray for the repose of the souls of our gallant and committed Chief of Army Staff and other personnel on board with him, the AFN solicits the support and understanding of all Nigerians in the face of this tragic incident. We wish to state that the Armed Forces of Nigeria remains resolute in combatting the security challenges bedeviling our nation. The sacrifices of our dearly departed heroes will not be in vain.

“The CDS urges all military personnel and their families to take heart and be consoled on this tragic loss. The CDS also reassures all Nigerians of the commitment and loyalty of the Armed Forces of Nigeria to the Constitution and Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as it continues to carry out its responsibilities. God bless Nigeria.”

President Buhari, in a statement signed by his Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Femi Adesina, described the affected officers and crew as “heroes who paid the ultimate price for peace and security in the land.”

While praying that God receives the souls of the patriots, the President said the crash “is one mortal blow to our underbelly, at a time our armed forces are poised to end the security challenges facing the country.”

He pledged that the departed would not die in vain.

In a swift reaction to the incident, the Edo State Governor, Mr. Godwin Obaseki, also expressed shock and sadness over the news.

Obaseki, in a statement by his media team, prayed that God grants repose to the departed souls.

“We pray for the repose of the souls of those who lost their lives in the unfortunate incident and admonish the military to continue with the patriotic efforts to secure the country.

“Lt. Gen. Attahiru served Nigeria meritoriously, bringing his skill, experience and expertise to bear in prosecuting the war against terror.

“He will always be remembered for his gallantry, commitment to service and dedication to our fatherland,” Obaseki added.



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