

Shi'ites Stone Inspector To Death In Clash With Police

By **Juliet Oyoyo** - June 22, 2018



Sheikh Ibrahim Zakzaky

Kaduna – A police Inspector was said to have died on Thursday during a clash between the police and Shi'ites who had come out to witness the arraignment of their leader, Sheik Ibrahim El-Zazaky.

Sheik El-Zazaky, leader of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN), had been in detention since December 2015 after over 300 of his followers were reportedly killed by soldiers.

The army had accused the Shi'ites of blocking a major road being used by the army chief, Tukur Buratai.

He was expected in court on Thursday and members of the IMN had trooped out in large numbers to witness his trial at the Kaduna State High Court but armed security personnel were said to have prevented the group from accessing the court complex along Bida Road, Kaduna.

The situation became violent around Ibrahim Taiwo Road as the Shi'ites pelted the officers with stones and other dangerous objects.

Reports had it that despite the release of tear gas, the protesters trooped out en masse.

The victim was said to have died while being taken to Barau Dikko Hospital, Kaduna, after sustaining injuries in the clash.

Police Spokesperson, Muktar Aliyu, was quoted by reports as claiming that the officer was stoned and stabbed to death.

"Yes, a police officer was killed by Shi'ites protesters today (Thursday). He was stabbed and stoned to death.

"He died on his way to Barau Dikko Hospital and was confirmed dead at the hospital," he said.

He said the police arrested about 11 Shi'ite members.

"Some of those arrested were among those that killed the policeman," he said.

According to him, the arrested persons would be charged to court.

Many members of the sect also sustained injuries in the clash which started on Wednesday.

El-Zakzaky's arraignment was, however, stalled by the absence of the trial judge in court.

Femi Falana, counsel to El-Zakzaky, told reporters that the court did not sit and the case was adjourned till July 11.

Falana also condemned the authorities for barring journalists from the court, saying the trial is public.

"Ladies and gentlemen you also have a duty to insist on being part of this trial because it is a public trial. It is your right to cover the proceedings," he said.

He added: "What happened in court today is that the court did not sit. We were informed by the registrar of the court that his lordship, Justice Gideon Kurada is indisposed.

"In the circumstance, we have to take a date, the prosecution and defence counsel have agreed to come back on July 11 to have possibly the arraignment and file an application for bail for our client.

"So, that is where we are. We don't know the reason the judge is not in court but we were told he was indisposed."

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