

Tragedy: Chief Of Army Staff, Attahiru, 10 Others Die In Military Airplane Crash

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NEWS



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LAGOS, KADUNA – President Muhammadu Buhari has expressed shock over the tragic death of the Chief of Army Staff, Lt. Gen. Ibrahim Attahiru and other military officers that occurred on Friday through a military airplane crash in Kaduna.

A statement by Femi Adesina, Special Adviser to the President on Media and Publicity describes the late officers as heroes who paid the ultimate price for peace and security of Nigeria.

“President Muhammadu Buhari is deeply saddened over the air crash that claimed the Chief of Army Staff, Lt. Gen. Ibrahim Attahiru, and other military officers.

“The President condoles with families of the deceased, the military, and Nigerians in general, describing them 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 says 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.

“The President pledged that the departed would not die in vain.”

The Chief of Army Staff, General Ibrahim Attahiru, alongside 10 other military chiefs and crew died in a plane crash yesterday, in Kaduna.

It was gathered that the Beachcraft 350 aircraft crashed at the Kaduna International Airport’s runway by 6p.m on Friday during a heavy downpour.

The Nigerian Air Force confirmed the incident via a statement issued shortly after the crash.

NAF Director of Public Relations and Information, Air Commodore Edward Gabkwet, said the incident occurred near the Kaduna International Airport.

“An air crash involving a @ NigAirForce aircraft occurred this evening near the Kaduna International Airport. The immediate cause of the crash is still being ascertained. More details to follow soon,” he said.

A close source, who was with the chief of army staff on Friday afternoon before the incidence informed Saturday INDEPENDENT that the craft had 11 passengers and crew. According to him, the officers were Brig Gen Mi Abdulkadir, Brig Gen Olayinka, Brig Gen Kuliya, Maj La Hayat, Maj Hamza and Sgt Umar, while the crew members include Flt Lt To Asaniyi, Flt Lt Aa Olufade, Sgt Adesina and Acm Oyedepo.

In a press release signed by Brigadier General Mohammed Yerima, Director, Army Public Relations, the COAS, Attahiru was enroute Kaduna from Abuja on Friday when the unfortunate incident happened. It would be recalled that this crash was the third incidence, since the new Service Chiefs assumed office in February, 2021.

The first that occurred near Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport in Abuja, killed seven personnel of the NAF returning from surveillance mission for the rescue of kidnapped school children in Niger State.

The second, in Borno State, where two pilots of the NAF were involved as the air craft on mission was said to have missed the radar and uphill, till today, nothing has been heard about the missing aircraft and pilots.

Attahiru was appointed Chief of Army Staff on January 26, succeeding Major General Tukur Buratai. He was 54 years.

Born on August 10, 1966 in Doka, Kaduna North Local Government Area, Kaduna State, Attahiru was a graduate of the Nigerian Defence Academy, Armed Forces Command and Staff College, Jaji and Nigerian Army School of Infantry.

He commenced cadets training in January 1984 and was commissioned into the rank of Second Lieutenant in December 1986 as an Infantry Officer.

He had a Masters degree in Strategic Management and Policy Studies from the Nigerian Defence Academy. Others include, Masters of Science in Human Resources Management and Development from Salford University in the United Kingdom and Graduate Diploma in international Studies from the University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Maj Gen Attahiru Ibrahim was appointed to lead the offensive against Boko Haram in the north-east in May 2017 and was later replaced with another general, Nicholas Rogers, who led a special military and police force to tackle ethnic clashes in the volatile central region. □