

Herdsmen kill General on Lagos-Ibadan Expressway

July 10, 2012 by Kunle Falayi [153 Comments](#)



The vehicle

| *credits:*

When Brig. Gen. Sylvester Iruh (retd.) left Ilorin, Kwara State, on Friday, July 6, his goal was to return to his family in Akute, Ogun State.

Having left them for a day to attend a burial in Ilorin, Iruh must have been eager to return to his Akute residence.

But his hopes were dashed when he was attacked by suspected herdsmen on the Long Bridge on Lagos-Ibadan Expressway.

Iruh's wife, Christiana, told our correspondent on Monday that she was expecting her husband when she received call that he had been attacked.

She said, "When I got to the Lagos State Emergency Hospital where he was rushed to, I was told he was dead.

"I asked the other occupants of the vehicle – two men and a woman – what happened to my husband and they said the tyre of the Hilux vehicle he was driving had problem. So, he had to stop on the bridge to change it.

"They said other motorists going on the road kept warning them that the place was dangerous. So, he decided to leave the place and change the tyre when they got to a safe spot."

Our correspondent learnt that Sylvester asked the other occupants to get into the vehicle quickly so that they could leave the place.

But before Iruh could join them, two men came out from under the bridge and immediately shot him with an arrow.

Christiana said, "I was told they immediately pounced on him after that and stabbed him all over his body and face. One of the daggers stuck to his back.

"The dagger was removed at the mortuary. The men who attacked him were said to be carrying sticks like Fulani nomads with bows and arrows in their bags."



The faulty tyre the deceased attempted to change

One of the occupants of the vehicle was said to have sustained stab wounds on his arm too. The suspects, it was learnt, robbed them of their money and phones.

PUNCH Metro learnt that Iruh had driven from Ilorin in convoy of a bus conveying women who also attended the burial.

One of the occupants of the bus, Mrs. Kemi Agbekeye, said, "This incident happened between 6.30pm and 7pm. We took off together, but Daddy Iruh overtook us. But when we got to the long bridge, we noticed that his car had stopped.

"We decided to stop and wait for them a little distance ahead because a trailer was parked in front of his vehicle.

"But after five minutes and they still had not taken off, we had to call them to ask what was wrong with the vehicle. That was when they told us they had been attacked.

"Moments later, the vehicle got to where we were, with Iruh in the back and blood gushing out of his body. He was pronounced dead at the hospital we took him to."

Agbekeye said while they were at the hospital, four people were brought in later that night, who said they had been attacked by herdsmen on the bridge. But none of them died.

It was learnt that Iruh was the Commander, Army Records, Lokoja, Kogi State and was at a time appointed Chief Security Officer in the state during Alhaji Idris Ibrahim's administration.

He retired in 2009 and had his pull-out ceremony on January 23, 2009.

Iruh's close friend and course mate at the Nigeria Defence Academy, Col. Femi Mepaiyeda (retd.), described him as "a gentleman and fine officer."



The vehicle

"Twelve days before that incident, we were together and I had no idea I was seeing my best friend for the last time. We started our military career the same day but I retired long before he did," Mepaiyeda said.

The incident again brings to the fore the numerous attacks by suspected herdsmen on the long bridge in the past.

The Ogun State Police Command at a time promised consistent patrol of the area based on the order of the Acting Inspector-General of Police, Abubakar Mohammed.

However, when our correspondent contacted the state Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Muiyiwa Adejobi, he said, the state Criminal Investigation Department, Eleweiran, Abeokuta, was investigating the incident.

He said, "We are always patrolling the long bridge because the area is notorious for robberies and attacks.

"Last night, we even arrested five suspected robbers there. When the police got wind of the attack, we did what we were supposed to do and we will continue to pay attention to the area.

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“But we have to be careful with saying they are herdsmen until we catch the culprits and are able to ascertain their identity.”