

UNILAG chancellor's brother killed during convocation

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A former Auditor-General of Borno State, Mallam Kaka Kyari, was among two persons who lost their lives during the University of Lagos convocation ceremonies that ended on Thursday.

Kyari, it was learnt, was among dignitaries in the entourage that accompanied the Shehu of Borno, Alhaji Abubakar El-Kanemi, to Lagos for his investiture as the UNILAG Chancellor.

It was learnt that another man, whose identity had yet to be ascertained, was allegedly shot by security operatives at the university's gate.

It was learnt that Kyari died in a fire incident that occurred on Thursday at about 2am at the university's guesthouse, while the other was reportedly shot dead on Tuesday night during an altercation with security operatives.

One of our correspondents, who visited the guesthouse on Thursday, saw cleaners and officials of the university clearing the debris in one of the two-storey buildings where Kyari died.

Officials of the Lagos State Environmental Protection Agency were also seen on the guesthouse's premises as of 2pm when the correspondent visited the university.

Though the fire affected five rooms in the building, there were conflicting reports on the cause of the inferno.

While one of the cleaners at the scene, who spoke on condition of anonymity, attributed it to sudden power surge, another source linked it to an unquenched cigarette butt used by one of the guests in the facility.

The source said, "The incident happened on Thursday morning, but the activities accompanying the three-day convocation did not allow people to know of the incident. I also gathered that the remains of the deceased have been conveyed to Borno State for burial."

The Deputy Registrar/Head of Information Unit of the university, Mr. Toyin Adebule, confirmed the death of Kyari.

In a statement on Thursday, he said the university regretted the incident and condoled with the family on the loss.

The statement read, "The Management of the University of Lagos regrets to inform the general public that there was a fire incident at the university guesthouse at about 2am on Tuesday, March 1, 2016.

"The fire occurred in the A Wing and affected rooms A12, A13 and A14. The university fire service was able to curtail the fire from spreading. The cause of the fire is being investigated.

"Sadly, the incident claimed the life of one of our guests, Alhaji Kaka Kyari, a former Auditor General, Borno State, who was on the entourage of the chancellor and was laid to rest according to Islamic injunctions today, March 3, 2016 in Borno State.

"The pro-chancellor, vice-chancellor, council members, management, staff and students of the University of Lagos commiserate with our chancellor and the people of Borno State on the demise of Alhaji Kaka Kyari."

The statement was however, silent on the second death.

It was gathered that the new chancellor, who arrived at the university on Tuesday, came with a large entourage, including top government officials, state and federal lawmakers, as well as members of his traditional rulers' council.

At his installation on Thursday, the Sultan of Sokoto, Muhammadu Abubakar; Emir of Kano, Muhammadu Sanusi; and the Oba of Lagos, Rilwan Akiolu, were among the royal fathers who graced the ceremony.

Curiously, El-Kanemi marked his seventh year in office on Thursday (yesterday) as the Shehu of Borno.

The spokesperson for the National Emergency Management Agency, South West zone, Ibrahim Farinloye, said the cause of the fire had yet to be ascertained.

He said, "The Zonal Coordinator of NEMA, Alhaji Suleiman Yakubu, confirmed the fire incident, which involved members of delegation of Shehu of Borno at UNILAG. The deceased was a brother of the Shehu."

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