

Pilot dies as NAF plane crashes in Kaduna

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• **As Nigerian pilgrim dies in Makkah**

From Molly Kilete, Abuja and Emmanuel Adeyemi, Lokoja

The Nigerian Air Force (NAF) yesterday announced the crash of one of its aircraft in Kaduna.

It also announced the death of the only occupant on board the aircraft said to be an instructor.

NAF's Director of Public Relations and Information, Air Commodore Adetokunbo Adesanya, in a statement, said the Air Beetle Aircraft was on a mission when it crashed.

He said: "The Nigerian Air Force (NAF), Air Beetle today (yesterday) crashed in Kaduna while on a mission. The only soul on board the aircraft, one of the NAF's experienced instructor pilots, was, unfortunately, lost during the mishap.

"The cause of the incident is unknown, but the Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) has immediately directed the constitution of a board of inquiry to determine the immediate and remote causes of the crash. The unfortunate incident is a tragic reminder of the hazards associated with the flying profession. The CAS and the entire NAF family commiserate with the relatives of the late instructor pilot.

In a related development, an elderly woman from Igala-Mela Local Government Area of Kogi state, Hajjiya Asmau Iyawa Abdullahi, has reportedly died in Makkah after a brief illness. The state's Hajj Commission chairman, Shiekh Lukman Abdullahi Imam, disclosed this on Wednesday while giving an update of the Hajj exercise in Makkah. He said the about 70 years old pilgrim died on Tuesday morning due to some complications.

"She died after attempts by our medical team to treat her failed. She was an elderly person and her health deteriorated immediately she arrived the holy land. May Allah forgive her of all her wrongdoings. She has since been buried in the city of Makkah," Imam said.

"Apart from this pilgrim that died, all our pilgrims are in good health. We give thanks to Allah for keeping all our pilgrims in good health," he said.

Sheikh Imam commended the good conduct of the state pilgrims, saying they have really cooperated with the commission.

About 2,973 pilgrims from kogi state are currently in Saudi Arabia performing this year's hajj.