

# Two Policemen Allegedly Killed as Melaye Escapes Assassination Attempt

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*Dino Melaye*

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• **Muslim clerics invoke curses against arsonists**

• **Gunmen assassinate director in Kogi**

Yekini Jimoh in Lokoja

Two policemen reportedly lost their lives Thursday during an alleged assassination attempt on the life of the Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), and Senator, representing Kogi West senatorial district, Dino Melaye.

The Senator, however, escaped the assassination attempt as gunmen suspected to be policemen and soldiers allegedly opened fire on his bullet-proof jeep.

The two policeman were said to have been mistakenly killed during the sporadic shooting.

Meanwhile, Melaye has thanked God for sparing his life once again.

In his twitter handle, Melaye said about 20 bullets were shot at his vehicle by the attackers who were suspected to be soldiers and the operatives of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS).

His words, "I thank God for sparing my life once again. Over 20 bullets holes on my Jeep. Combination of the police; SARS and the military; God, I thank you".

The Senator arrived Kogi State on Wednesday to inaugurate over 145 constituency projects.

This is coming as Muslim clerics in the state Thursday

invoked curses on those who burnt down Melaye's constituency projects in Lokoja

Also, unknown gunmen on Tuesday killed a director at the Federal Polytechnic Idah in Kogi State, Mr. Solomon Ayegba Sani.

The deceased was allegedly shot dead at about 10 p.m at his residence in Idah LGA of the state.

THISDAY reliably gathered that Melaye was on his way to Isanlu in Iyagba East Local Government Area to inaugurate some projects when some gunmen prevented him from entering the town.

According to sources, the Senator who left his country home at Ayetoro-gbede, met a road block with heavy truck, shortly before Isanlu as the uniformed men equally set up bonfires with tyres, blocking anyone moving into the town.

The Senator, sensing danger, made a u-turn back to Ayetoro-gbede with his entourage.

However, on arriving his country home, some of the armed men allegedly attacked his convoy, and opened fire on his bullet-proof Mecedez Benz Jeep as people ran for their dear lives.

It was equally gathered that the armed men, numbering over 30, invaded his house shooting, and scaring people away as the people of the community had to desert the town to avoid the wrath of the rampaging gunmen.

Before the arrival of the Senator to the state on Wednesday, some thugs had threatened to kill him if he stepped his foot in the state.

However, some of his projects located in Lokoja LGA, which were to be inaugurated by the Senator, were razed down by some thugs on Wednesday morning.

Meanwhile, the spokesperson of Kogi State Police Command, Mr. William Ayah, when contacted by THISDAY on the matter, said his office was not aware of the incident.

In a related development, Muslim clerics in the state Thursday invoked curses on those who burnt down Melaye's constituency projects in Lokoja.

The Speaker of the state House of Assembly, Hon. Matthew Kolawole, has also condemned in strong terms, the burning of the schools by some political thugs in the state.

The prayer by the Muslim clerics, which was said across all the mosques in Lokoja during "Isha-i", the last prayer of the day was in reaction to the burning and destruction of some of the constituency projects meant to be inaugurated by Melaye.

During the prayer in one of the mosques in Sarki-Numa in Lokoja, the clerics prayed that God should expose those behind the burning of the schools.

In another development, Mr. Solomon Ayegba Sani of the Federal Polytechnic Idah has been killed by unknown gunmen.

THISDAY gathered that the victim was gunned down in his residence by some unidentified gunmen.

The late director has just been promoted to the position of Director of Works by the Federal Polytechnic.

Efforts to speak with the officials of the Federal Polytechnic proved abortive as they could not be reached on their telephone lines.