

Beat: News

BBC journalist Komla Dumor dies in London at age 41

-, 19.01.2014, 11:00 Time

USPA News - Ghana-born journalist Komla Dumor, best known for presenting BBC World News program 'Focus on Africa,' died at his home in London on Saturday after suffering a suspected heart attack, his employer said. He was 41 years old.

"BBC News regrets to announce the death of the BBC Focus on Africa presenter, Komla Dumor," the British Broadcasting Corporation said in a brief statement. BBC spokeswoman Katie Marsh had no details on the cause of Dumor's death, but the BBC's news operation reported that he is thought to have suffered a fatal heart attack. Dumor appeared well during his last broadcast on Friday, during which he interviewed South Sudanese musician and former child soldier Emmanuel Jal. "Komla's many friends and colleagues across Africa and the world will be as devastated as we are by this shocking news. Komla was a leading light of African journalism - committed to telling the story of Africa as it really is," said Peter Horrocks, director of BBC Global News. Horrocks added: "Africa's energy and enthusiasm seemed to shine through every story Komla told. He will be deeply missed. The sympathies of all his colleagues at the BBC are with his family and friends." After Dumor's sudden death, Ghana president John Dramani Mahama praised the journalist in a message on his official Twitter account. "Our nation has lost one of its finest ambassadors. [Komla Dumor] was a broadcaster of exceptional quality and Ghana's gift to the world," the president said. Komla, born in Ghana and one of the continent's best known journalists, began his journalism career with talk radio in his home country. After a decade of broadcast journalism in Ghana, where he won the Ghana Journalist of the Year award, he joined the BBC in 2007 to host 'Network Africa' for BBC World Service radio. He further went on to present 'The World Today' radio program at BBC World Service before becoming the first host of 'Africa Business Report' on BBC World News in 2009. He later became the first host of the channel's well-known 'Focus on Africa' program, which airs each weekday. In November 2013, monthly news magazine 'New African' named Dumor as one of 100 most influential Africans. "[Dumor] has established himself as one of the emerging African faces of global broadcasting," it said at the time. "As a lead presenter for BBC World, Dumor has considerable influence on how the continent is covered." Talking about his work in one interview, Dumor said: "I take the job seriously, I take you seriously, I take what we're doing seriously." And in another interview he added: "There's so much more to tell about Africa than the usual stories about war, famine and disease."

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-1804/bbc-journalist-komla-dumor-dies-in-london-at-age-41.html>

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