

## Sunset for a Star Broadcaster

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Yinka Craig, ace sports commentator and television programmes anchor loses battle against cancer For nearly two years, he battled to stay alive and continued to use his golden voice to entertain and educate Nigerians. But last Tuesday, September 23, Yinka Craig, ace broadcaster, who made his mark in the Nigerian Television Authority, NTA, died at the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota, USA where he was receiving treatment for cancer of the immune system. He was aged 60. He was diagnosed of the ailment about two years ago and had received financial support from Lagos State government and other well meaning Nigerians for further treatment abroad. The Lagos State government donated N15 million out of the N38 million required for his treatment in the US. This rekindled hopes that he would soon be back on the screen soon, but that was not to be. Craig attended the NTA Television College Jos, where he was trained as a broadcaster. His experience in the profession is as old as the history of broadcasting in independent Nigeria. He joined the then Western Nigerian Broadcasting Service barely in his 20s before joining NTA. He became a household name through hardwork. He covered many beats. In sports coverage and presentation, he would long be remembered for his humor-spiced style. He was also the face of innovative television programmes like Newslite and the breakfast magazine show, AM Express. Danladi Bako, former director general of the National Broadcasting Commission, NBC, as a colleague of Craig described his death as a great loss. "He remains one of the most effervescent, most professional and irrepressible broadcasters Nigeria has ever produced. He knew a bit about everything. I knew him since 1977 at NTA." "Craig is a thorough professional, very friendly, charming and nice person to work with," said Bayo Ogori, one of Craig's producers in the AM Express breakfast show. Gbenga Daniel, governor of Ogun State said "Yinka Craig's passion, professionalism and sense of patriotism in a profession that prides itself as epitome of quality service was almost without equal." In a statement issued by Daniel through Wale Adebayo, his chief press secretary, he prayed God to grant the family fortitude to bear the irreparable loss. Fashola, Lagos State governor, said Craig would be missed by Lagosians having lived all his life and attained professional excellence in Lagos. The deceased was born in Abeokuta, Ogun State in 1948 and is survived by Kehinde, his widow, two sons and a daughter.