

# Mangled body at Lagos airport suspected to be stowaway

## ● As authorities begin probe

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**A**uthorities at the Murtala Muhammed International (MMIA), Lagos, have commenced investigation to ascertain the circumstances surrounding the discovery of a mangled body on runway 18R of the airport on Thursday, *Daily Trust* Saturday can report.

The runway majorly serves international flights and at night, domestic flights also land at the runway.

Findings by our correspondent, however, indicate that the body is suspected to be a stowaway.

A stowaway is a person who hides on a ship, aircraft or other

vehicles in order to travel without paying or being seen.

A highly placed source who spoke with our correspondent yesterday said the dead body could not have been an airport worker because no worker would be wandering around the highly restricted area.

Besides, it was learnt that the body could not be easily identified as it was mangled when it was discovered.

A source said, "As I am talking to you, security operatives, including the police, Department of State Service (DSS), the Aviation Security (AVSEC), are currently investigating it. But we are suspecting it is a case of stowaway.

"But investigation will determine

this. Nobody has been reported missing by any agency, company or organisation at the airport. So the deceased person may be a stowaway."

The Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) confirmed the incident, saying the body was discovered by its motorised cleaner "that was cleared to carry out a de-rubberization and sweeping of the runway."

The acting general manager, Corporate Affairs of the agency, Mrs Faithful Hope-Ivbaze, said that on discovering the remains about 0106hours, the situation was escalated to relevant departments.

"As a result, between 0110 and 0343 hours, the runway was temporarily closed to allow for immediate evacuation of the remains. Flight operations resumed at 0343 hours. Investigations are ongoing and

a report will be issued accordingly," she said.

This was not the first time the country's flagship airport would witness a security breach. In July 2019, an Azman Air flight taking off to Port Harcourt from the domestic wing of the airport aborted takeoff when a man later identified as a Nigerian carrying a bag ran towards the aircraft and attempted to climb its flaps.

Also, in December of the same year, another intruder was apprehended at the airport when he attempted to access an Air Peace aircraft heading to Owerri.

A former commandant of the MMIA, Group Captain John Ojikutu (retd), also said there were many questions to be answered about the incident.

He said, "It happened yesterday,

and the body was discovered about 9am. So it could have happened before 9am and all flights that landed before then could be culpable if none of them made a report. Secondly, who was the victim, or whose body was it that was found, an airport worker or intruder?

"If an airport worker, it should not be difficult to identify him if he was wearing the correct uniform and an on-duty card. If an intruder, how did he get into the airport restricted area?

"Outside the perimeter fence, do we have a security fence? If there's no security fence, is the perimeter securely enhanced to meet the global standards for airport security fence?

"There are many questions for the airport authorities and the air traffic control management to answer to be able to get into the cause of the serious incident."