

Adamawa elections tribunal member dies in

road mishap

*From Emmanuel Ande,
Yola*

THE elections petitions tribunal in Adamawa State adjourned its sitting yesterday following the news that one of its members, Justice S. O. Olawoyin, is dead. Olawoyin died in a motor accident along Wukari-Jalingo road on his way to Yola from Osun State where he had gone for the Sallah break.

The tribunal was billed to take final submissions from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Action Congress (AC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on the governorship petitions before it today.

Members of two political parties, the PDP and Action Congress (AC), who tramped to the Stella Obasanjo Women Development Centre, venue of

the tribunal, were forced to disperse when it became apparent that the tribunal would not sit following the unfortunate incident.

The tribunal will resume sitting on Monday on the petition by the AC governorship candidate, Alhaji Ibrahim Bapetel, challenging the election of Governor Admiral Murtala Nyako on grounds that he was illegally excluded from the elections on the eve of the polls.

Secretary of the tribunal, Mr. Abdullahi Ndagi, who confirmed the death of the judge, said the four other justices on the panel had already arrived in Yola before they learnt of the mishap involving Olawoyin and others. He

added that the members were too devastated to sit this week. The adjournment was a mark of honour for the departed justice.

The team of lawyers that had announced their appearances include: Dr. Wale Babalakin (SAN), Chief Wole Akoni and Tayo Jegede, who wore long faces met at Jegede's office for over two hours.

Speaking with journalists after the meeting, Babalakin described as unfortunate the death of Justice Olawoyin, whom he said, was a star in the judiciary.

He stated that the lawyers, both of the plaintiff and the respondent, met to prepare their condolences and that they would not discuss the possibility of another member being sworn in now to replace the late justice.