

Man dies after falling from Edo high court five-storey building

By Michael Egbejule,
Benin City

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A man suspected to be attending a community case in Edo State High Court fell to his death in the court premises while trying to find a toilet. The 65-year-old Moses Airhiagbonkpa died at the court complex after he fell from the five-storey building currently undergoing renovation at Benin-Sapele road.

The victim's body was discovered when some court workers saw blood dripping down the empty lift with the man's feet dangling. An official explained that the deceased was at Court 10 at the last floor for a community case. He said the deceased went to urinate and didn't ask for directions but went through a door he thought was the toilet and fell to his death.

"We used to have a lift that has gone bad and this administration is fixing it. The company carrying out the renovation work removed the old lift and is still working on it. The MD of the firm said there was a ribbon indicating no passage but that I cannot say anything about."

A relative of the deceased, Johnson Obonor, said they came from Ugiekhue for a case of community land dispute. He explained that they were inside the courtroom waiting for their lawyer to get a new date since the court was not sitting when the late Moses went out to ease himself.

He said: "It was Moses that gave the lawyer money. When we discovered the court was not sitting, the deceased got up to urinate and we told him to return early so that we can go home after the lawyer has taken a date. After taking the new date for our case, we



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waited for a long period but he did not show up. So, we assumed he had gone downstairs to wait for us where we parked our car.

“Unfortunately, we did not find him there. We sat down in the vehicle and tried to contact him via his mobile telephone without any luck. He was not picking. Later we saw people moving somehow and we decided to follow them. They said a construction worker fell but we told them he came with us.”

A&K Construction is the firm handling renovation of the court complex. As at the time of filing this report, the company could not be reached for reactions as efforts proved abortive. However, security personnel were on ground to ensure peace while arrangement was made to evacuate the deceased to the morgue.

The deceased, a father of five, was in court for a case relating to a land dispute in Ugiokhuen, Oredo local government area of Edo State. Another distraught relative of the deceased, Osasu Isoken, blamed the construction company for not cordoning off the area by putting a signpost indicating danger on the site.

“I was at the state Criminal Investigation Department (CID), when my brother called me that Mr. Moses fell from the court building. I hurriedly arrived at the court complex and went upstairs to check. I found out that he got stuck in the lift. The man is a learned man and I believe he will know that the place is not in use if there was a signpost indicating danger but nothing of such was there and it could have been anybody,” he lamented.

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