

Former Lagos special adviser killed

By Miriam Ndiakanwu

MR Ahmed Onipede, a former Special Adviser on Mineral Resources to former Lagos State Governor, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu, has been murdered by unknown men in the early hours of yesterday at his residence in Badagry.

An unconfirmed report stated that the Action Congress (AC) chieftain was attacked after he returned from a political meeting.

Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Mr Marvel Akpoyibo, who confirmed the incident on phone, denounced the rumour.

Akpoyibo said: "It was true that the body of the man was found dead in his house at Badagry in the early hours of Monday and the Police had waded into the matter to investigate and determine the cause of the death.

"People should stop the speculation that the man was murdered in his house and allow the Police to carry on with the investigation. Such a speculation always misleads members of the public and causes disaffection among the political associates," he added.

Ekiti election tribunal resumes sitting today

THE Ekiti State Election Rerun Petition Tribunal hearing the petition filed by the AC governorship candidate in the April 25 re-run election, Dr Kayode Fayemi, will resume sitting today after a 12-day break.

The five-man tribunal, chaired by Justice Hamma Barka, adjourned sitting on February 4 after the second defendant, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) had closed its defence after calling 38 witnesses.

Fayemi is challenging the declaration by the Independent National Electoral

THE Lagos State House of Assembly has received the blessing of an anti-corruption group for its ongoing probe of the government for alleged financial recklessness.

The coalition Against Corrupt Leaders (CACOL) urged the Assembly yesterday to get to the root of the matter.

The probe was sparked by an advertorial by a group: "The True Face of Lagos," which accused the executive and legislature of financial misconduct.

Speaking during a protest at the Assembly, CACOL leader, Debo Adeniran, said the lawmakers acted rightly in raising a six-man panel to probe the allegation leveled against Governor Babatunde Fashola and the Assembly.

In a letter presented to speaker, Yemi Ikuforiji, CACOL the Assembly to continue with the investigation.

He said: "The House whose name has been stained by this allegation should prove to the world that they are not in conspiracy with the executive arm of government. Members should tell us what was passed in the appropriation

Commission (INEC) of Governor Segun Oni of PDP as the winner of the election.

The AC candidate, who is contesting the election in six wards of Ifaki Wards 1 and 2, Orin/Ora Ward, Usi Ward in Ido -Osi Local Government Area and in Ipoti Wards A and B in Ijero Local Government Area of the state, closed his case on October 8 after calling 47 witnesses.

Oni had on October 19, last year, opened his defence to prove that he won the election, closed his case on January 20 after calling 67 witnesses.

Before the adjournment,

By Ajose Sehindemi

bill as yearly budget".

The group he said, holds the Assembly in high esteem and would not want anyone to jump into conclusion on any allegation without availing the accused, the opportunity to defend themselves.

Adeniran said: "We therefore, have not concluded that the accused are either guilty or innocent. However, we have reasons to believe that the matter is in the verge of being swept under the carpet going by various political maneuverings noticeable among the ruling elite in the state and their political overlords and associates.

"We have requested the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) to step in and equally investigate the serious issue raised in the allegation.

"We are compelled to do this because these agencies by the Acts that established them are conferred with the powers and responsibility of investigating graft in all ramifications, this is with a



•Fayemi

PDP had called 38 witnesses, including Adesola Durodola, the state Chairman of Democratic Peoples Party (DPP), who told the tribunal that DPP members in the state supported and voted for PDP during the April 25 re-run governorship election.

view to ensure transparency in the investigation process".

Responding, Ikuforiji explained that when the allegation got to the floor of the House through the publication, "we willingly set machinery in motion to ensure that our government is accountable to the people. I want to reassure you that this Lagos that we are proud of, is the Lagos that is Centre of Excellence. I mean excellent in all that it does.

Responding, Ikuforiji said the Assembly believes gov-

ernment should be accountable. Ikuforiji further explained that the constitution, he said, empowers the Assembly to perform oversight functions among which is to investigate anybody, institution or government.

"We respect Court orders, we are mindful that no Court can stop the legislature from performing its constitutional duties. Notwithstanding the injunction, the House has taken all necessary legal action to be represented and the House will do a thorough job when the investigation resumes."

Cultists kill two in Ekiti Valentine's Day clash

From Odunayo Ogunmola, Ado-Ekiti

A VALENTINE'S Day celebration at a popular hotel in Ado-Ekiti, the Ekiti State capital, turned bloody on Sunday night when suspected cultists invaded the hotel and killed one of those having fun there.

The suspected cultists also killed a tertiary institution student at Araromi area of Adebayo, also in Ado-Ekiti, while suspected ritualists also killed a young girl along Housing Road, removing organs of her body.

The Nation learnt yesterday that the yearly celebration at the hotel, located on Iyin Road, was in full swing when the suspected cultists stormed the place and reportedly went for their target, believed to be a student.

Sources said the victim, who sensed danger immediately the cultists entered, made an attempt to flee but was overpowered by his assailants who reportedly hacked him down with machetes.

The fear caused by the assailants reportedly brought the show to an end with panic-stricken fun seekers rushing out of the hotel premises. The manner the assailants operated was said to have given them away as cultists.

The second incident, which occurred at Araromi in

Adebayo area of the state capital, led to the death of a student of the tertiary institution in his residence in a night raid by suspected cultists.

Sources at the neighbourhood told reporters, who visited the scene, that the victim was cut down with his head almost severed from his body.

The double-flat house, which serves as hostel to students, was deserted by all the students, ostensibly for fear of being arrested by security agents.

The first flat had an inscription: "Peace Villa" on it while

VC reiterates commitment to change

THE newly appointed Vice-Chancellor of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko (AAUA), Ondo State, Professor Femi Mimiko has again pledged his commitment to the rapid transformation of the 10-year old University.

He decried a situation in which Nigerian universities continued to be poorly rated in the global community of universities and expressed his desire to deepen the in-

tegrity of his University's academic programmes with a view to producing globally competitive graduates that are capable of holding their own anywhere in the world.

Mimiko made these statements during a courtesy call on the Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission, Professor Julius Okogie, in his office in Abuja, last Wednesday.

Most of the residents that reporters attempted to speak with kept mum.

The third victim, about 17 years old, was reportedly killed by suspected ritualists at Housing Road area of Ado-Ekiti.

Her body was dumped at Akinlabi Olu Avenue, off Iworoko Road, with several parts removed, fuelling suspicion that she was a victim of ritual killers.

Most of the residents that reporters attempted to speak with kept mum.

The second flat was christened "Uptown Villa".

The victim, whose identity was yet to be ascertained, was reportedly dragged out of the house and slaughtered with weapons suspected to be axes and left to bleed for some time before the assailants left the scene.

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