

## Ekiti withdraws murder case against APC chair, others

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Ekiti State government has withdrawn the charge of murder brought against All Progressives Congress (APC) Chairman Chief Olajide Awe.

Awe and two others were accused of complicity in the murder of two Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) members, Mrs. Juliana Adewumi and Mr. Murphy Jeje on March 30, 2013 at Erijiyan-Ekiti in Ekiti West Local Government.

The other accused persons, who are also APC members, are Mr. Sola Adenijo and Mr. Sefiu Owonifari. Owonifari died about three weeks ago.

Awe was forced to flee the state after the Governor Ayo Fayose administration filed the charge against him.

Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice Mr. Kolapo Kolade moved an application for the withdrawal of the case, which came up for hearing yesterday before Justice Dele Omotoso of High Court 7.

Following the adoption of the application to withdraw the case, Justice Omotoso discharged and acquitted the accused.

Granting the application, the judge said the court supported the development because it was to promote peace.

Kolade said: "What happened in court today is far beyond politics. The governor in his usual manner of promoting peace and brotherliness in communities and across party lines has intervened.

"In this matter, many good people across Nigeria, even the defendants in this matter have appealed to His Excellency to intervene, particularly at Erijiyan.

"As the defendants and complainant are of same family, the complainants have given a go-ahead, saying the matter should be withdrawn.

"This development supports the course of justice. One of the cardinal principles of justice is promotion of peace.

"The major beneficiary is Chief Jide Awe, the APC chairman in Ekiti State. He, alongside his aide and other members were alleged to have killed Madam Juliana Adewumi,

mother of the Deputy Speaker and Murphy Jeje, a member of PDP, in 2013. The complainant is the Deputy Speaker."

Defence counsel Mr. Ibrahim Olanrewaju said: "Reason seems to have prevailed today. The attorney- general came to court to withdraw the charge.

"By the provision of our law, the court was left with no option but to discharge and acquit the defendants. This means that this charge can't be filled in any court again.

"As you all know the genesis of the case. We are not saying somebody was not murdered, but we all know that it is more of political fight than looking for justice.

"Taking from the words of the attorney- general, he said they are trying to allow peace reign in the community and to promote good neighbourliness and we support it.

"We salute the state for doing this. We salute the courage of the attorney-general for the bold step and we salute the courage of our lord, Justice Omotoso, for discharging and acquitting the defendants. He could have just discharged without acquitting them."













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