

# Minister Ocholi, wife son die in auto crash

## Buhari, Atiku, Bello, APC mourn

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**M**INISTER of State for Labour and Productivity, James Ocholi, his wife, one of his sons and one other person, on Sunday, died in an auto crash on Kaduna-Abuja highway.

His wife died later, as she was initially in a critical condition, but others died on the spot.

The accident was said to have occurred when the minister was returning from a journey to Kaduna with members of his family.

It was learnt that one of the tyres of the SUV conveying him burst on high speed and the car sumersaulted before running into another SUV in the convoy.

The impact of the accident was said to be so severe that the minister and his son died on the spot, while his wife and the driver of his vehicle were initially rushed to Doka Clinic, a village near Kaduna.

Confirming, the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), through the Head, Media and Strategy, Mr Bisi Kassem said, all the victims had been taken to National Hospital, Abuja.

Minister of State for Aviation, Senator Hadi Siriki, who also confirmed the incident in a tweet, said the crash occurred on Sunday afternoon in Kaduna State.

President Muhammadu Buhari, on Sunday, expressed shock and sadness over the tragic death of Ocholi.

In a statement issued by the Senior Special Assistant to the President (Media and Publicity), Garba Shehu, in Abuja, Buhari described the death as untimely, regretting that Nigeria had lost a key component of the change agenda.

"Barrister Ocholi was an accomplished and patriotic Nigerian, who was keen to accept the call to service at a time his country needed him," he said.

President Buhari added that in the few months he had been in office, the late Ocholi had already begun to distinguish himself through his commitment and dedication to his portfolio.

The president also condoled with the government and people of Kogi State, which he described as having lost a distinguished and irreplaceable son.

### Atiku mourns

Former vice-president and chieftain of APC, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, expressed shock and sadness at the untimely and sudden death of Ocholi.

A press statement from the media office of the former vice-president described the late Ocholi as "a wise and brilliant man, who was expected to impact significantly on the Buhari-led administration and the lives of Nigerians in many positive ways."

Atiku lamented that the nation had lost a committed professional whose place in his profession, political party and the budding administration in place today, would be hard to fill.

The statement urged those who knew the deceased, notably President Muhammadu Buhari, his colleagues at the Federal Executive Council (FEC) and the generality of Nigerians to take heart and bear the irreparable loss.

### It's a monumental loss -Gov Bello

Kogi State governor, Alhaji Yahaya Bello, described the death of the minister as a monumental loss to the state in particular and the country in general.

The governor, who expressed shock and devastation at the news, saying the deceased was a prag-

matic, dynamic, humane and brilliant law officer, who was known around the world for his dexterous approach to legal and political issues and "one of the most unswerving constitutional lawyers Nigeria has ever produced."

Bello, in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary (CPS), Kingsley Fanwo, recollected with nostalgia, how the late minister joined other progressive minded individuals around the country to drive the intellectual pillars of the All Progressives Congress (APC), describing the late Ocholi as a complete gentleman who

was irrevocably committed to the advancement of Nigeria.

He summed up his death as an irreparable loss to Kogi State, Nigeria, the APC and the legal profession, while he prayed for the repose of the souls of the departed.

Ocholi was from Abocho in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State and the governorship candidate of the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) during the 2011 election.

### We are in shock -APC

The national secretariat of the All Progressives Congress (APC), in a

statement by its national secretary, Mai Mala Buni, described the deaths as a monumental loss.

Buni, in a condolence message, said the late Ocholi, who was the party's former deputy national legal adviser, would will be remembered for his selfless service to the country, party, legal profession and his home state, Kogi.

While extending his condolences to the people and government of Kogi State, Buni prayed to Almighty God to grant Ocholi's immediate family the fortitude to bear the painful loss.

## 2016 budget: MDAs to spend N40bn on cars

### How the budget was muddled up by NGO

TAIWO ADISA - ABUJA

FEDERAL Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) have budgeted more than N40 billion for purchase of vehicles, buses and vans in the 2016 budget, a check through the budget has revealed.

Details obtained from the budget proposals currently being worked on by the National Assembly indicated that the total allocation for purchase of motor vehicles, buses and trucks in the 2016 budget is about N41.41 billion.

It was confirmed that some big spending agencies, including the Nigerian Port Authority (NPA) and the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Central

Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and the Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) will be spending a total of N12 billion on vehicles and buses in the year.

The sum of N24.38 billion is allocated for purchase of motor vehicles generally by some ministries and departments, while the same agencies allocated the sum of N1.67 billion for purchase of buses. The sum of N362.65 million is allocated for purchase of vans.

But some MDAs, including the Judiciary and the National Assembly, did not include details of the figures meant for purchase of vehicles in the year.

Though the National Assembly has expressed its readiness to buy project vehicles worth N4.7 billion, the figures for the Ministry of Finance and the Judiciary were not provided.

The Presidency had originally budgeted the sum of N3.6 billion for the purchase of vehicles in the 2016 budget, but the figures were changed to N360 million following outcry in the media.

The balance of N3.2 billion on the original amount for the purchase of cars in the presidency was moved to other subheads, fuelling suspicion among the lawmakers that the money was being reserved for the original purpose.

Details obtained from the budget indicated that the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation would spend the sum of

and Housing has a budget of N74 million for purchase of vehicles in 2016, while the Federal Road Maintenance Agency has the sum of N1.8 billion for the purchase of some assets.

Other ministries and agencies and their expenditure on vehicles included Transport (N29 million for vehicles and N65 million for buses; Water Resources (N24.5 million); Budget Office of the Federation (N170 million); National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission (N42.5 million); Agricultural Research and Management Institute, Ilorin (N65.5 million); Federal College of Produce Inspection and Stored Products Technology, Kano (N10 million).

Meanwhile, indications emerged on Sunday that a non-governmental organisation (NGO) with fund-

## Gunmen behead Rivers APC chief, kill wife, son in Rivers