

Bamaiyi: My prime witness died a night before bribery case

John Chikezie

A former Chief of Army Staff, retired Lt-General Ishaya Bamaiyi yesterday told an Ikeja High Court, Lagos how a prime witness was found dead in an attempt to testify against a former Lagos State Chief Judge, Justice Ade Alabi, over a N10million bribe allegation.

Bamaiyi said that the witness, one Chief Popoola Martins (now deceased) was meant to testify against Justice Alabi before the National Judicial Council, NJC, over a N10million

bribe allegation which he had instituted.

Bamaiyi made this revelation while testifying against an alleged serial fraudster and Lagos socialite, Fred Ajudua, in a \$8.4million fraud case.

Ajudua is standing trial for allegedly defrauding Bamaiyi in 2012 when they were both incarcerated at the Kirikiri Maximum Prisons for different offences.

Bamaiyi accused Justice Alabi of sending Mr Martins to the prison where he was incarcerated for treason to solicit for a N10million bribe from him and other inmates.

According to the General, under cross examination

by Ajudua's lawyer, Olalekan Ojo SAN: "The former CJ sent one Mr Martins to our prison to get us to pay N10million each for us to secure freedom.

"At that time, I was yet to be granted bail and Justice Alabi was the judge presiding over my case then. Mr Martins told us once we get to court during the next proceedings that our matter would be adjourned till two weeks and that was exactly what happened.

"This made me believe that it was truly the judge that sent Mr Martins. But I refused to give him any money" he said.

Bamaiyi further confirmed that it was his allegation against the former CJ that made the NJC to set a panel to look into the allegation.

When asked why the NJC ruled the accusation as false, Bamaiyi responded, "I appeared before the NJC to give evidence against the

CJ. And it was later reported that the NJC ruled the accusation as false but the main issue was that the other witnesses were not allowed to come in and testify.

"The main witness, Mr Martins was not allowed to make a statement. When I protested and he was finally allowed, he died a night before the proceedings.

"On the next adjourned date when Mr Martins was supposed to appear before the NJC, we were

told he died at night under unknown circumstances inside his house. Someone called his lawyer to inform him that Mr Martins had died.

"I spent 8 years at Kirikiri Prisons. Although some of it was mostly at the hospital," he said.

Bamaiyi said that Ajudua also claimed he had links with the Vice President, Professor Yemi Osinbajo, who was the then Attorney General of Lagos State.



Herdsmen: Senate tasks FG on cattle movement