



Police Arrest Four over Rep's Murder

•House may adjourn sitting •Etteh's appearance before panel may not hold today

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Four persons have been arrested by the police in Ibadan, Oyo State, in connection with the murder on Friday night of a Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) member of the House of Representatives, Mr. Segun Moses Oladimeji.

In Abuja, the House may, in line with its tradition, adjourn Tuesday's sitting immediately after resumption to honour the slain Oladimeji who represented Akinyele/Lagelu Federal Constituency of Oyo State in the House.

Already, the Speaker, Mrs. Patricia Etteh, has sent a delegation led by the House Leader, Hon. Tunde Akogun, to Ibadan to commiserate with the deceased's family.

Meanwhile, the scheduled appearance of Etteh, and her deputy, Alhaji Babangida Nguroje, today before the nine-man panel investigating the controversial N529 million renovation contract in the House may not hold.

This is sequel to the inability of the panel to conclude hearing sessions with top officials of the National Assembly management last Friday.

Oladimeji, alias Segelu, was murdered at Ejioku, a suburb of Ibadan, by yet-to-be identified assailants who stormed a relaxation joint near PDP office at Lagelu Local Government demanding to see the lawmaker who was at the spot.

While Oladimeji, a grassroots politician and close associate of Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu, was killed, the three other people with him sustained gunshot injuries.

The arrested persons are said to be assisting police detectives to unravel the mystery surrounding the murder of the lawmaker.

THISDAY learnt that Oladimeji had advised the nine-man panel investigating the controversial contract in the House to allow their conscience to guide them in the assignment.

An associate of the deceased and member of the panel, Hon. Depo Oyedokun from the Oluyole Federal Constituency in the state, told THISDAY in a telephone interview that the passage of the slain lawmaker would leave a big vacuum in PDP in his constituency and in the state.

Oyedokun said, "We saw last on Thursday last week when he told me that he was going to Ibadan and I advised him to postpone the trip till Friday because that was the start of the weekend and because most people used to travel on Fridays but he told me he had to attend to some urgent matter the next day."

The panel member said there was no sign that his colleague would be embarking on an eternal journey.

"No, there was no sign in him that he won't return. I recall that he gave what I could describe as parting advice to me as a member of the panel looking into the award of contract of the Hon. Speaker and his deputy's residences in Abuja.

"He had sought to know how far we have gone on the panel activities and as someone I respected, I opened up to him and he said that whatever happens, I should try to observe due diligence and be true to my conscience."

But Etteh and Nguroje may not take their turns before the panel today as planned.

The probe panel had taken two days to drill members of the National Assembly Management invited to appear before it and was unable to meet with the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) officials last Friday as earlier scheduled.

FCDA officials are expected to take their turn today at the House Hearing Room 1 venue of the panel sitting in the assembly complex.

THISDAY confirmed yesterday that like Etteh and Nguroje, the contractors that handled the controversial projects would also be given new dates to appear after FCDA officials must have met with the Hon. David Idoko-led panel.

The House is, however, expected to adjourn sitting immediately after resumption on Tuesday to

honour Oladimeji.

Following parliamentary practice, the business of the House may be suspended for one day after the death of any member from either the Senate or the House.

When the House resumed from the summer break on Tuesday September 4, the Speaker immediately moved for an adjournment to honour the late former Senate President, Chief Evan Enwerem, who had died the recess.

Etteh has sent a delegation to Ibadan to commiserate with the family of the late Oladimeji.

In a telephone interview with News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) yesterday in Abuja, Etteh said the Leader of the House, Akogun, was at the head of the delegation.

Condoling the family, Etteh, who said she saw the lawmaker on Thursday, described his death as "shocking, unfortunate and sad."

Reacting to the death, the Special Adviser to the Speaker on Media, Funke Egbemode, said Oladimeji would be greatly missed.

Egbemode, who spoke on telephone, urged those in charge of security to get to the bottom of the case and bring the killers to book.

Also reacting to the murder, Hon. Lanre Agoro (PDP, Oyo) said he was shocked and totally destabilised over the death of his colleague.

Agoro said he was with the late lawmaker on Thursday in Abuja after the plenary session when he showed Agoro where to collect official number plates for our cars.

"I really do not know why he was killed. He was so fatherly to all of us and was appealing to us not to rock the boat in the crisis in the House," he said.