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Protests over Ogun council chief's death

Written by Kolade Larewaju

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CRISIS erupted in Sagamu, yesterday, over the death of the Treasurer of the Ijebu East Local Government Council, Mr. Tunde Fajemgbesin, as protests marred the election into various offices of the state Chapter of the National Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE).

To stem the tide of violent reactions to the death, the state police command stopped the election while three people were arrested in connection with the incident.

Activities at the Sagamu Local Government secretariat and adjoining communities were disrupted as the protesters blocked entrances to the complex to register their grievances over the controversial death of Fajemgbesin.

Delegates to the election were charged and spoilt for war, alleging that some people who were against their popular choice were behind the death of the treasurer who was seen as the main backer of the candidate.

The state police command swiftly moved in to stop the election to prevent a total breakdown of law and order.

Fajemgbesin, sources said, had lodged in a popular hotel in Sagamu but died in controversial circumstances on Monday night.

The Director of Information of the council, Mrs. Olusola Dixon, however, denied that he died from poisoning, saying Fajemgbesin "slumped and died at the venue of the election."

Dixon's position was, however, not in consonance with the explanation of the Chairman of the local government, Mr. Tunde Oladunjoye, who said the council had ordered an autopsy on the body of Fajemgbesin to determine the cause of his death.

Oladunjoye, who aligned with the explanation of the state police command, added that it would be premature to guess the cause of the death of the council treasurer.

"Only the autopsy will determine what killed him. It has been done today and we learnt the result will be ready tomorrow (Wednesday)," he said.

The state Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Muiyiwa Adejobi, confirmed the death of Fajemgbesin, but said he was not a contestant in the election. Adejobi, an Assistant Superintendent of Police, added that the police were working on the theory that the deceased was drugged, saying the police had arrested three people for interrogation in connection with his death.

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