

TRIBUTE ON BABA, SENATOR M.A.E. ONUKUN OON

Writing a tribute about Pa Senator M.A.E. Onukun OON, is like scratching the skin of one's lap which wouldn't touch the depth of the fleshy body. Even at that, the truth must be said about an unusual man, an enigma, a political analyst of no mean dimension, an epitome of contentment, a shrewd businessman, irresistible community leader and lover of his creator.

Baba had respect for tradition and custom as exemplified in his respect for the memory of his parents being the path through which he came to the world but without idolising them, a virtue one would recommend to those of us still in this divide. His unmistakable devotion to God, his creator is equally noteworthy.

Baba regarded and cherished his Nigerian citizenship and defended same with integrity and fidelity throughout his sojourn on earth for which he was given national recognition as a recipient of **Officer of the Order of the Niger (OON)**. He was equally a proud and committed son of Ikale; bestriding two of the leading families of Osooro; the Lumure and Joola with genealogical paternal affinity of the Okunnughi and Oshennogho maternal dynasties respectively.

Our legendary, Senator Michael Atijosan Emmanuel Onukun detest laziness, lying, double standard and fraudulent practices.

Though, a contented man, Baba did not eat with two hands as a conservative manager of his resources in order not to constitute a burden to his children, friends and society. Notwithstanding his riches, Baba was neither flamboyant nor proud. He cherished friendship, particularly with the younger generation. He was a believer in the social security of the youth, many of whom he helped to acquire formal education without orchestration. I learned how to drink Lipton tea without milk but with lime or lemon juice from Baba, which I later found to be of profound health benefits.

All of us, one way or the other, would miss Baba! The wives will miss a husband with strong and protective personality. The biological children will miss a lover of education, counsellor and a father who would chastise with words rather than the

cane. His younger friends would miss a chronicler of historical events, a Shakespearean scholar, the last standing encyclopedia on Ikale history, development and trajectory. His political associates will miss an objective analyst who believes in peaceful and constructive engagement, even with political adversaries rather than descent to mudslinging. The church will miss a devoted member who served God with his heart and resources while his extended family would miss a symbol of unity, identity and pride.

Our great Senator M.A.E. Onukun left his indelible marks on marble for generations to read his epitaph in hardwork, intellectualism, honesty and fear of God. We his children and friends should sustain his legacies of self motivation, contentment, accommodation, moderation and fear of God.

Baba, we were looking forward to your 99th birthday and even the centenary celebration both of which you have discounted by 138 days and 503 days respectively.

Baba, as you continue your service to your creator in a higher terrestrial, we covet the saints triumphant to receive you into the bosom of father Abraham. Amen.

BABA, WO GBÓ ÓÒ!

Hon Ola Oguntimehin (Alaspart)

Your political son.