Sexual assault: Court fixes February 17 for Baba Ijesha to open defence

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Justice Oluwatoyin Taiwo of Domestic Sexual and Special Offences Court, Ikeja has fixed February 17, 2022 for a Nollywood actor, Olanrewaju James, also known as Baba Ijesha to open defence in his ongoing trial over allegations of sexual assault.  
  
The trial judge fixed the date following submission by the defence counsel, Mr O. Alo, who prayed the court for a short adjournment date as the senior lawyer, Mr Dada Awosika (SAN) was indisposed to appear in court.  
  
Baba Ijesha is facing a six-count charge bordering on indecent treatment of a child, sexual assault, attempted sexual assault by penetration and sexual assault by penetration filed against him by the Lagos State government.  
  
  
  
He had pleaded not guilty to all the counts charge when he was arraigned on June 24,2021.  
  
However, when the case was called yesterday, Alo told the court that the proceedings was scheduled for adoption of address on no-case submission but the suspect has decided to open defence.  
  
He said: “We did not file no case submission again. In the view of the development, we pray the court to give us date. Both senior counsels representing the defendant are not in court. Although Babatunde Ogala had informed Mr Awosika that he will not be in court today. Mr Awosika is indisposed; he didn’t know that he will not be able to be in court. We apologise my Lord.”  
  
Prosecution counsel, Dr. Jide Matins in his response, prayed against the adjournment. He said the lawyer, Alo should continue with the case.  
  
Justice Taiwo however granted defendance counsel request for a short date, adding if the senior lawyers are not in court on the next date, the lawyer will go on with the case.  
  
She said the lawyers always attend proceedings and subsequently adjourned to February 17 and 18, 2022 for defence.  
  
It could be recalled that the Lagos State government had closed its case on the last proceeding after the cross-examination of the sixth prosecution witness by the defence.  
  
Following the prosecution statement, the defence counsel, Mr. Kayode Olabiran, announced to the court that the defence intended to file a no-case submission.  
  
  
  
Justice Taiwo said: “We will take the no-case submission in the New Year; the court is rounding off.”  
  
Earlier, in her ruling, Justice Taiwo said Baba Ijesha’s confessional statement to the police was admissible in evidence and that there was no evidence before the court, which proved that the embattled Nollywood actor was tortured into giving the statement to the police.  
  
The prosecution had called six witnesses who testified against the defendant.  
  
They are actress and comedienne, Ms Damilola Adekoya, alias Princess; the 14-year-old survivor (name withheld); a child expert, Mrs Olabisi Ajayi-Kayode; a medical doctor, Dr Aniekan Makanjuola and the Investigating Police Officer (IPO), ASP Wahab Kareem and Omane.