

The Executive Committee of the African Table Tennis Federation (ITTF Africa) has also expressed deep sorrow over his death, describing him as one of the continent's most influential figures in the sport.

The ITTF Africa President Wahid Enitan Oshodi said Obisanya left a lasting legacy through his achievements as an elite player and his dedication to developing future generations of athletes. He also highlighted Obisanya's work as an international table tennis instructor and national coach, noting his role in mentoring prominent Nigerian players, including Segun Toriola and Monday Merotohun.

Tributes have been pouring in from continental and state sports organisations in honour of late Babatunde Obisanya, who died on Tuesday, October 6, 2026, at the Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH), aged 77, following a prolonged illness. The loss of the icon has been followed by recognition for his contributions as a player, coach and administrator who helped shape modern table tennis in Africa.

Obisanya's career featured several historic milestones. In 1968, he won the inaugural men's singles title at the Asoju Oba Cup, establishing himself as a leading figure in Nigerian table tennis.

He later gained international recognition in 1975 during the era of "Ping Pong Diplomacy," when he partnered with Lateef Sunmola to reach major international tournament finals. The pair reportedly became the only non-Asian duo to achieve the feat at the time.

His outstanding performances earned him Nigeria's Sportsman of the Year award in 1976.

The NTTF President Adesoji Tayo, in his tribute to the coach, said:

"It is sad to hear of the passing of one of Nigeria's longest-serving players and coaches, Babatunde Obisanya, whose immense contribution to the sport cannot be overstated," Tayo said.

Obisanya's death marks the loss of a prominent figure whose influence extended beyond competition to coaching and mentorship, even after the end of his tenure, reflecting deep commitment and the development of table tennis beyond Nigeria and across Africa.