

Gaddafi's Secret Burial, NTC to Investigate Death

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MISURATA, Libya, Oct. 25 (UPI) — Fallen Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi and his son, Mutassim Gadhafi, were buried Tuesday at an undisclosed location, a government official said.

Anees al-Sharif, a spokesman for the National Transitional Council's military unit, said members of the former leader's tribe were allowed to pray over the body before it was buried in an unmarked grave in the early-morning hours, CNN reported.

The Gadhafis, along with former Defense Minister Abu Bakr Yunis, were buried five days after they were killed in Sirte. The three bodies were available for public viewing at a walk-in cold-storage room in Misurata.

In a statement, Gadhafi's family called on the United Nations and Amnesty International to pressure Libya's new leaders "to hand over the bodies of the martyrs of their tribe so they can be buried according to Islamic rites," a pro-Gadhafi television station reported.

The NTC, the United Nations and other organizations have called for an independent investigation into the Gadhafi's death.

NTC Chairman Mustafa Abdul Jalil and other officials have said Gadhafi was killed in crossfire. However, Jalil said Monday, "In response to international calls, we have started to put in place a commission tasked with investigating the circumstances of Moammar Gadhafi's death in the clash with his circle as he was being captured."

The inquiry was formed to determine whether Gadhafi was killed execution-style after being captured alive by fighters Thursday in Sirte or died in crossfire as government officials assert. Jalil suggested anti-Gadhafi fighters may not have been the ones who killed him, hinting the fatal bullets might have come from Gadhafi supporters who feared he would implicate them in atrocities if he survived and was put on trial, The New York Times reported.

Jalil also sought to reassure Western supporters Libya would be a "moderate" Muslim nation, backing away from his statement Sunday during a liberation ceremony that Shariah, the legal code of Islam, would be the basis of all legislation, The Daily Telegraph reported.

"I would like to assure the international community that we as Libyans are Muslims, but moderate Muslims," he said.

France and the European Union had warned the NTC to respect human rights soon after Jalil spoke Sunday.

Meanwhile, a fuel tank explosion in Sirte killed more than 100 people, an NTC official said Tuesday.

“There was an enormous explosion and a huge fire. More than 100 people were killed and 50 others wounded” in Monday night’s explosion, NTC commander Leith Mohammed said.

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