

Lagos family blames Navy officers for man's death in land tussle

29th October 2025



| By Johnson Idowu

The family of a man, Lawal Rashed, has blamed his death on the alleged shooting carried out by some officers of the Nigerian Navy who had accompanied a woman, Caroline Fagorusi, to a construction site in the Imowo area of Ijede, Ikorodu, Lagos State.

This is just as the family alleged that two others were hospitalised after sustaining injuries from the gunshots.

PUNCH Metro learnt on Tuesday that the incident occurred on September 17 following a dispute over a development fee payable by Fagorusi to the family who sold the land.

A community leader and spokesperson for the deceased's family, Olatunji Akorede, told our correspondent in an exclusive interview that the incident followed the community's demand that landowners in the area should begin developing their plots, as criminal elements were beginning to hide around undeveloped lands.

He explained that a cooperative society had purchased a large expanse of land about 40 years ago, and after the family realised that the undeveloped plots were becoming a hideout for criminals, they invited the cooperative leaders to discuss the need to develop the land.

Olatunji said during the meeting, it was agreed that members who had been allocated plots must show evidence of allocation and pay N1m as a development fee to the family, which they accepted.

He claimed that earlier in September, Fagorusi and another person approached the family to begin construction on their allotted lands. While the second person presented her allocation document and paid the fee, Fagorusi was said to have claimed that she had yet to begin construction.

According to him, some days later, Fagorusi, accompanied by some navy officers, contacted him to say she wanted to start construction work. He alleged that when they met at the site, she did not present her allocation document but promised to bring it later, prompting them to allow her workers to proceed.

Olatunji added that when he realised that the woman continued visiting the site with naval officers and had refused to honour the agreement, he reported the matter to the Ijede Police Division.

He said he was at his office on September 17 when he was informed that Fagorusi had gone to the site again without fulfilling her promises. He said he then sent some of his relatives to meet her and collect the required documents.

“On Wednesday, when they came again, I called the DPO, who contacted her, but she refused to show up. The DPO said he would come around soon. After about an hour, when she still didn’t show up, I asked my brothers, who were nearby, to go and check on them and collect the documents we requested.

“Some moments later, those I sent called to say that the naval officers didn’t allow them to reach Mrs Fagorusi and that they had been shot. When one of them raised the alarm, the officers shot him, then shot at two others. When they realised that one of the victims had died, they fled the scene.

“When we realised what had happened, I called the DPO, who came around with his team.

We rushed the victims to the hospital, where one was confirmed dead while the two others battled for their lives.”

Related News

JUST IN: New Naval Chief assumes office, vows to tackle oil theft

Ecobank \$42m Fraud: Court adjourns case against Briton, Indians to Jan 27

TotalEnergies begins AFCON trophy tour in Lagos

He added that after the incident, the police arrested three people, but they were released after three days. He also alleged that the police demanded N700,000 for an autopsy and that all efforts to ensure justice had been futile.

When contacted, Fagorusi confirmed that there was an agreement to pay N1m as a development fee before construction, but appealed that she could not pay immediately because she is a retiree.

She admitted that on the day of the incident, she had gone to the site with the navy officers and called Olatunji repeatedly without response.

Fagorusi claimed that the naval officers fired their guns when about 60 young men attempted to attack them and snatch their rifles, adding that she was unsure if the gunshots caused the death.

“After calling him repeatedly and getting no response, I told him that because of my age, I can’t keep coming all the time. On Wednesday, when my husband and I arrived with the naval officers, we met a crowd of about 60 people shouting. The officers stood in front.

“One of the young men rushed towards them as if to snatch one of their guns, which made them shoot. I didn’t see anyone who died because everyone fled. The soldiers wanted to call for reinforcement, but we urged them not to because it could turn into chaos.

“It was the next day, after I travelled, that I saw Facebook posts claiming someone had been killed. I didn’t see anybody there, but the officers fired shots to prevent being attacked.”

When contacted, the Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Moshood Jimoh, said the matter was not reported to his office, contrary to the family’s claim that it had been transferred to the command.

He advised that since the incident involved the Navy, the family should report it to the naval authorities.

Meanwhile, when contacted on Tuesday, the Nigerian Navy spokesperson, Commodore Aiwuyor Adams-Aliu, promised to get back to our correspondent but had yet to do so as of the time of filing this report.

Despite prohibitions against law enforcement officers interfering in land disputes, several officers have been caught getting involved in cases of land disputes.

PUNCH Metro reported in August that some policemen from Nasarawa State were arrested for their role in a land dispute clash that left no fewer than seven people dead in the Owode Onirin Market, Ikorodu area of Lagos State.

In a similar development in 2014, a Lagos-based businessman accused police officers of aiding suspected land grabbers to encroach on his property located in the Ikate area of the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of the state.