

# My brother was killed over false accusation – Cousin

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File Copy: Jackson, the deceased brother

By Ayoola Olasupo

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*Jackson Eje, a cousin to a site engineer, Solomon Odeh, speaks to **AYOOLA OLASUPO** about the events that led to Solomon's death in Lagos State after he was allegedly mistaken for a thief by some private security personnel*

***What is your relationship with the late Solomon Odeh?***

Solomon was my second cousin, and he hailed from Iyakom-Oboru in Oju Local Government Area of Benue State.

***How old was he?***

He was 36 years old in October this year.

### ***Can you explain what happened to Solomon?***

I neither lived with him nor did he live with me, but he worked as a casual worker at Eko Atlantic construction, though I've forgotten the name of the company handling it. He always did the morning and evening shifts.

That fateful day, he was on the evening shift, according to what he told his roommate. So, he left for work between 11:30 pm and a few minutes to 12 am because the place is not far from the house.

He closed from work, and on his way home, the security company, whose personnel had issues with him, was involved. As he was going home, they intercepted him and said there was a case of robbery around the area and that some people had come to steal iron rods.

When they intercepted and questioned him, Solomon said he didn't know anything about it and that he was not part of those people. He said he was just going home. In the course of beating him, according to what the suspects confessed at the station, he became overwhelmed and couldn't bear the beating anymore.

According to what they said—because the dead can no longer tell his side of the story—after they dealt with him, he tried to escape from them. The suspects said he ran into a canal within the area where he was accosted, and the guards left him there.

The suspects confessed that they beat my cousin with a machete and other weapons before he tried to run for safety and jumped into the canal.

The incident happened on Friday night, November 7, 2025. While going to work that day, he left his phone at home, so all efforts to reach him proved abortive.

At a point, his roommate became worried, and they started looking for him. They went to the company to check his whereabouts. They said he wasn't at work that evening. But during their findings, the same security men—some of whom have now been arrested—said they had an issue with somebody the previous night and that the person was beaten to a stupor.

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They also said that while trying to hold him, he escaped and jumped into the canal.

***What did they say happened thereafter?***

We intensified our search for either his body or the possibility of rescuing him alive. That lasted from Saturday until Sunday, when his body was recovered. Some scavengers found his body in the canal.

That was what happened based on what the suspects said. But Solomon is no longer alive to tell us his side of the story.

***How many suspects were arrested after the incident?***

They were three, but two suspects were arrested, and the third person is still at large. During the struggle, the third suspect—the one who confronted Solomon—got injured and broke his hand.

Till this moment, that person is still at large, but the IPO handling the case has his picture.

Solomon's body has been deposited in the mortuary. When we reported the case at the Bar Beach Police Station, the police took it up and transferred it on Monday (November 10) to the State FCID, Panti, Yaba.

***Tell us about the kind of person your brother was.***

Before his unfortunate death, he never had issues with anybody. His wife had just given birth five months ago. He rented an apartment in Ikorodu with his uncle, but he worked at the company I mentioned and went home whenever he was off duty.

He used to stay with his friend at work. I'm not saying this because he was my brother, but he genuinely had no issue with anyone. Even in his neighbourhood, not everyone knew him because he was always focused on work. He would go to work, return, and stay at home. He was an easy-going person with no criminal record whatsoever.

***How did your family receive the news of Solomon's death?***

It was his roommate who first went to the company on Friday night when he couldn't find him and saw that Solomon had left his phone at home.

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They didn't get any useful information that night. His colleagues only said he was around earlier but had left. All efforts to reach him failed.

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On Saturday morning, the roommate continued searching and asked security personnel around the area. They mentioned that some people had come to steal and that someone they chased escaped. We didn't know it was Solomon.

When the scavengers later found the body, they alerted the community. Solomon's friend returned that afternoon, saw the body, and identified him.



Late Solomon

*What was your initial reaction?*

When the roommate informed Solomon's uncle, the news spread across the family. It was shocking. Solomon left home healthy without knowing he would never return.

***What went through your mind when you heard he was mistaken for a thief?***

I thought the security personnel must have acted under the influence of something or with malicious intent. If they truly suspected him, the right thing was to hand him over to the police, not beat him.

They did not follow any professional procedure. I believe they either had something against him or it was a case of mistaken identity.

***Will the family take up the case?***

Yes, of course. We want nothing but justice.

***Did Solomon ever complain about security issues around the site?***

He never mentioned anything like that.

***How has Solomon's death affected the family?***

His mother has not been stable since hearing the news. Solomon was the first child of a peasant farmer. His wife has also been devastated. She just gave birth to a baby boy five months ago. Solomon was the breadwinner, responsible for his wife, child, and parents.

Since he died, family members have been contributing money to feed his wife and child.

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If you had the chance to address the security personnel, what would you say?

We haven't had any discussion with the company, and I cannot recall the name of the security firm. If I meet any of them, I will demand justice. Their actions killed the breadwinner of a family; they must take responsibility.

***What are the biggest questions the family still needs answers to?***

One major concern is the poor handling of the investigation. The third suspect—the prime suspect—is still at large, and we haven't seen serious effort to arrest him.

The police also delayed in sending a letter inviting the security company. An incident that happened on November 7 should have been swiftly investigated, but as of November 10, the company had not yet been formally notified.

***What kind of justice does the family want?***

We want the Lagos State Commissioner of Police to ensure all perpetrators are arrested, including the security personnel still at large, and to hold the security company accountable.

***What would you want Nigerians to remember most about Solomon?***

He was peaceful and never looked for trouble. Nigeria happened to him, and he met an untimely death. We want authorities to ensure justice is done. We have already paid for the coroner test, and the autopsy fee—about N250,000—is what we are struggling to raise now because the police said it is necessary for the investigation.

***How much did you pay for the coroner test?***

We paid N105,000. We were told that the autopsy may cost about N250,000 or more. We are struggling to raise the money because the police said the investigation cannot progress without it.