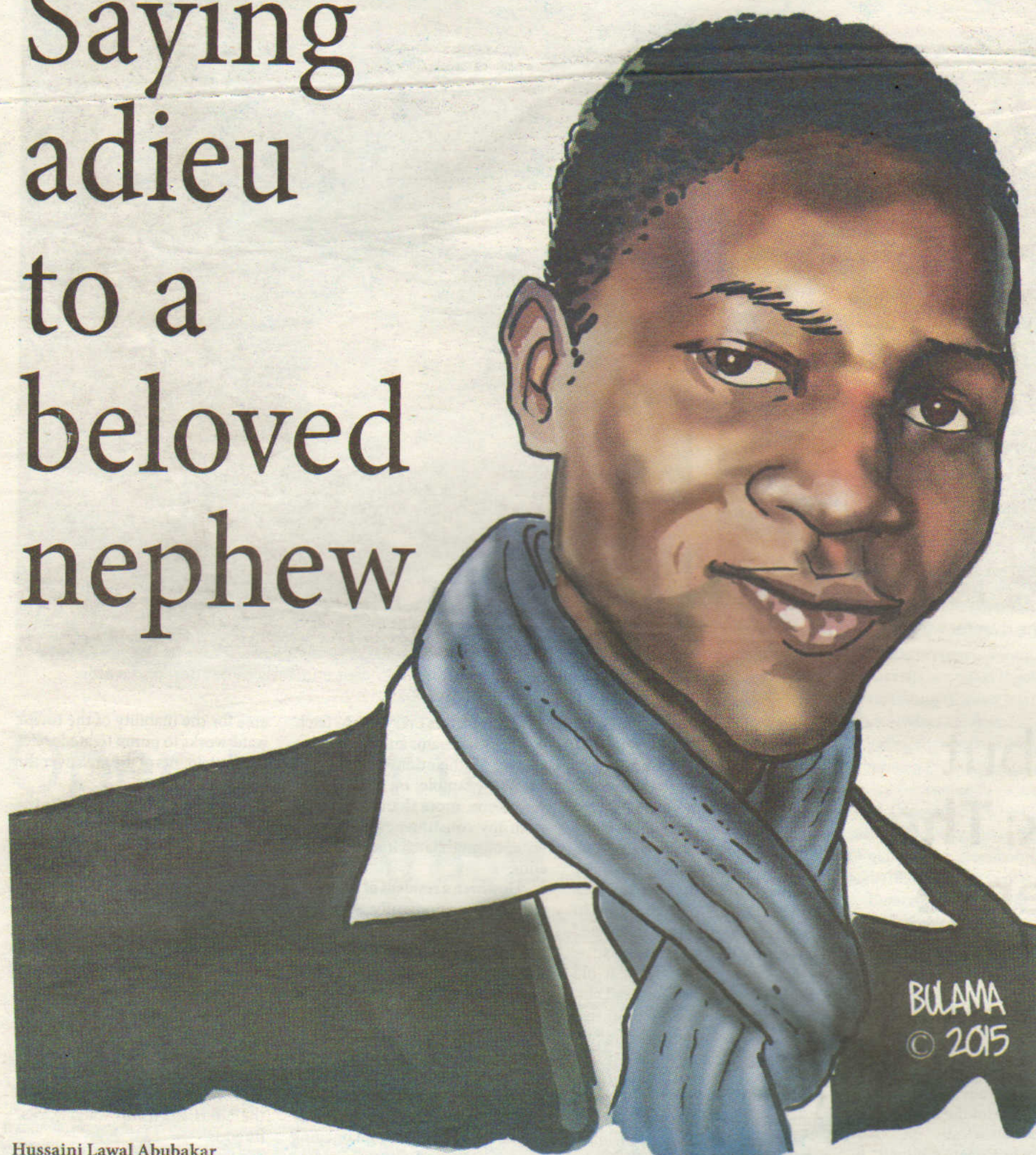


Saying adieu to a beloved nephew



Hussaini Lawal Abubakar

“I feel safe where I am.” These were the words Ahmad wrote on his Whatsapp profile on Tuesday, March 24, 2015. Some 24 hours after that, he passed on to be with his late mother, my sister Haulat. Innalillahi wa'inna ilaihair raji'un (from Allah we come and to Him we shall return). Obviously, losing a loved one is very painful, especially one who seems to be everyone's favourite within the family. He died on March 25, 2015 in a car accident in Mafara along Sokoto-Gusau road together with Mansur Bawa Mansu (Abba), the son of my late sister's mate on their way to Kaduna. Before his demise, he was a Masters student in the Department of Biological Sciences while Abba is a 200-level student of Computer Science, all in Usmanu Dan Fodio University.

Despite my being his uncle and the age gap between Ahmad and me, we were so close to the extent that I no longer saw him as my nephew but as a friend and confidante, because I always enjoy his company. Any time Ahmad came to visit, it makes me very happy and I would definitely forget anything bothering me. He regularly visited the family house.

When I went to university in 2009, Ahmad was then in 200 levels, with two of his sisters, Zakiya and Hajara (Ummi). I got in through Direct Entry (D.E) and that made us on the same level with him but in different

Mu'azu, another nephew of mine, Ahmad's cousin and I were in the same department studying Sociology. We graduated in 2012, Ahmad and I with second class degrees. Though some of Ahmad's course mates saw him as not being very serious during their 100 level days, whenever the results are out, he was ahead of them and they nicknamed him 'Unserious With High GP'. The issue is

Ahmad, you will be safer where you are now, as we pray to the Almighty to make Aljannatul Firdausi your final home and also meet your late mother there

that Ahmad has a good background and a very sharp brain. His father placed him and his siblings on the path of knowledge and instilled its value on them right from their early age.

Before he started his Masters programme in UDUS, he applied for BUK but he couldn't get admission. He used to tell me that he prefers ABU because they are offering Pharmacognosy at Masters level and he wanted to go for it, but I told him that he should accept whatever comes his way, because there is greatness in everything and if he work very hard he can get his PhD before he is 30.

Some weeks before his death, Ahmad had an accident on a motorcycle in Sokoto. When Mu'azu called to tell me about it, I was worried. He had earlier come back to Kaduna to visit the National Ear Care Centre for a problem with one of his ears and when he was about to go back to school, he said he was likely to come back during the election period. I told him not to bother, not knowing that was the last time I would see him alive.

Ahmad used to be very popular during our university days, probably the most popular fellow in our midst. I got to meet a lot of people through him because from 300 levels until our graduation, we lived in the same room despite him having bed space elsewhere. Because I stayed with my nephew and his cousin Mu'azu in the same room, he too joined us there. He once contested for the post of Assistant Secretary General of the

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Student Union Government but lost. I told him to consider such as a blessing in disguise and just concentrate on his studies.

Ahmad lived a simple life and he was very hard-working, and he strives to achieve any goal he sets for himself no matter how difficult it is. After his NYSC, he started teaching in Newbreed School, Badiko in Kaduna where he served and also engaged in supplying eggs to some shop-owners. Anytime I saw how hard he worked I used to tell my sisters and Mu'azu that one day Ahmad will be successful in life because this is how many successful people started.

Ahmad will always be remembered for the kind of life he lived, especially within the family and among his friends. Ahmad had no enemies and he was kind and loyal to a fault. He was also very humble and would still call some of his young uncles and aunties using respectful titles, even though he was older than them.

When I was told that Ahmad was dead, the first thing that came to my mind is how would his father, sisters and brothers feel? No one will miss Ahmad more than them, not only because they are his blood but because they all knew and believed in his goodness. His stepmother told me many times how she would just enter the family kitchen and see things he bought for them with his own money. Despite having junior ones at home, Ahmad is the most active one and most times he is at the service of his father. He will certainly be missed by all those who knew him.

We all have to accept his death as something destined by Allah because every soul shall taste death. As Muslims, we cannot dare to question why he left us now. Insha Allah, Ahmad, you will be safer where you are now, as we pray to the Almighty to make Aljannatul Firdausi your final home and also meet your late mother there.

Abubakar wrote from Kaduna.