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IN-DEPTH

How 45-year-old woman was allegedly tortured to death by DSS in Nasarawa

From Umar Muhammed,
Lafia

A 45-year-old woman, Salamatu Adamu, who was arrested and incarcerated in connection with a kidnapping case, was reported to have been tortured to death while in custody by personnel of the Department of State Security (DSS), Nasarawa State Command.

Salamatu, a mother of two girls and a boy, ground grains as a business in front of her residence at Tudun Kofa in Lafia, the state capital.

Daily Trust investigation revealed that a little boy in the area, whose identity has not been confirmed as at the time of filing in this report, was abducted and that a man, whose identity is also yet to be identified, and who is believed to still be in the custody of the DSS, allegedly accused Salamatu of knowing the whereabouts of the said kidnapped little boy.

According to our investigation, the suspect, in a confessional statement to DSS, claimed that he was in a nearby mosque when he saw Salamatu chasing a number of children, who were obstructing her business while playing there. And that, since the children left the scene on that fateful day, the said little boy had not been seen till date. And hence her arrest.

The husband of the deceased, Mr. Musa Shittu Mohammed, and his family have, however, appealed to the Director General of the Department of State Security, to in the spirit of fairness ensure the perpetrators of the illegal and inhumane act are brought to book.

"We appeal to your good office, as a good citadel of fairness to intervene and order proper investigation on the perpetrators of this illegal and inhumane act and to ensure that justice is served for the peaceful repose of her soul, if not, we will be forced to explore legal means against your establishment without notice," the husband said through his counsel.

A witness, who doesn't want his name in print, confided to our correspondent that, Salamatu was said to have been picked by some men dressed in black, who dragged her into a vehicle, where she was asked to kneel down, while some of the men proceeded to beat her.

A complaint letter was written to the Director General of the DSS, National Headquarters, Abuja, dated November 17, 2023, and signed by Abubakar



■ Salamatu Adamu at her young age

Abubakar Dogara Esq and eight others of A. A. Dogara & Co, according to a copy obtained by our correspondent in Lafia.

A. A. Dogara & Co, is engaged by the husband of the deceased, Mallam Musa Shittu Mohammed, to unravel the circumstances surrounding Salamatu's death and to ensure justice prevails.

The letter, titled "Complaint against the Nasarawa State Office of the Department of State Security Services (DSS), on the Unlawful Detention and Eventual Murder of Salamatu Adamu of Tudun Kofa in Lafia, Nasarawa State", detailed how the deceased, Salamatu Adamu, was arrested, tortured and killed by personnel of the state command of the DSS.

"It is our client's firm instruction that on the 7th day of November, 2023, at about 9am, while he was working on his farmland at the Federal University of Lafia in Lafia, Nasarawa State that, he received a distress call from his wife (Salamatu Adamu), who in his considered opinion appeared and/or sounded to have been in some kind of danger and needed his help.

"However, due to the noise from the background, he couldn't fathom what was happening to her. Our client immediately switched off the call and place a call across to her, but her number

was no longer connecting, as the officers of the DSS have switched off her GSM handset.

"Our client, consequently rushed back home and only to be greeted with the devastating news from his daughter that his wife was picked up by some unknown men in a Sharon vehicle, whom upon further investigations, our client later discovered to be personnel of the Department of State Security Services, serving in Lafia, the Nasarawa State Command.

"Considering how disturbing the incident was, our client immediately swung into action and visited the Nigeria Police Force, Area Command along Jos Road, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Lafia Command and all other Divisional Police Headquarters within the state capital, but there was no trace of her from the men that took her away from their residence.

"It was against this backdrop that our client reported the situation to the Madakin Lafia, Alhaji Isiaka Dauda, and the Madaki recommended that he reports the matter to the Divisional Police Officer in charge of "A" Division in Lafia.

"It is our client's further brief that the following day being 8th day of November, 2023, our client then reported the matter to the DPO as recommended by the Madaki. Upon the said report,



■ Bichi

our client together with the DPO then visited the Department of State Security Services in Lafia and made the same inquiry about his wife, but they were told that the head of operations was not on seat, and they asked out client to drop his contact to enable them reach out to him for a possible appointment with their head of operations, which he gladly did.

"However, towards late hours of the said day, our client got a call from them, asking him to come around tomorrow morning in respect of the case he reported.

"The next day on reaching their office, our client was told that, there was no any woman in their custody that matched his description; however, he can check her out at the Specialist Hospital, which he did.

"However, on reaching the said Specialist Hospital, our client was also told that, there was no any woman that matched his description of her currently on admission in this hospital, except if our client will have to check the morgue.

"Our client reluctantly visited the morgue, only to receive the shock of his life, upon finding the body of his wife lying lifeless without any explanations of what happened to her, and how his healthy and vibrant wife ended up in a morgue, without any lawful justification.

The petition said that the

husband was later informed that the body was deposited at the hospital by officials of the DSS.

"Considering the mysterious circumstances surrounding her arrest, unlawful incarceration and eventual murder, our client and his family are devastated and constrained from taking any legal action against the perpetrators of this dastardly and heinous act."

In his reaction Mr Muhammed Musa, of the Department of State Security Service (DSS), said he could not talk on the matter unless he sought for permission from the national headquarters, adding that as soon as he gets a green light or permission, he would call our correspondent and talk on the issue but he had not called back as at the time of filing in the report.

"I am not authorized to speak on the matter. The petition is directly to the national headquarters and not the Nasarawa State Command of DSS," he said.

When contacted, the spokesman of the Department of State Services (DSS), Peter Afunanya, promised to get back to Daily Trust immediately he got proper briefing regarding the incident.

"I will revert when and if I get a proper brief on subject matter," Afunanya told one of our correspondents.

However, he was yet to respond by the time of compiling this report.