

Death In Kwara: Police, Family Disagree Over Autopsy Report



cover daily
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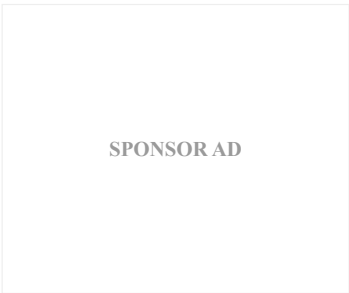
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Controversy has continued to trail the autopsy report on the death of Abdulquadir Jimoh, 35, while he was in the custody of the Kwara State Police Command, Daily Trust reports.

The late Jimoh, a resident of Balogun Fulani community in Erubu/Asunnara, Ilorin, said to be a poultry farmer, allegedly died in the cell on December 20, 2024, around 8pm, following his arrest a day earlier over a debt of N220,000 to one Peter.

The police reportedly claimed the victim hung himself with the cloth he wore inside the cell.



However, his mother, Adijat Moriyike, and other family members accused the police of torturing him to death.

The incident, which went viral across the country, prompted Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq and IGP Kayode Egbetokun to visit the family.

The governor said in a statement that his administration was “keenly following the probe into the death in police custody’ urging members of the public to remain calm”.

Egbetokun, on his part, had vowed to ensure a thorough investigation, during his presence at the Ilorin residence of the bereaved.

The leadership of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Ilorin branch, also called for justice for the deceased.

The chairman of the branch, Sulyman Mohammed-Hassan Kosemani, during a visit to the bereaved family, said the tragic incident marked the third reported case in one year involving the death of an innocent Nigerian at the hands of the police in the state.

“The previous cases, including the death of a student of Kwara State Polytechnic and the incident at Tanke Tipper Garage involving officers from the Ganmo Police Division, underscore a disturbing pattern of excessive force and a lack of accountability within law enforcement agencies,” he noted.

“The NBA is dedicated to advocating for the protection of human rights and the rule of law. We call upon the authorities to act decisively in addressing these incidents of police misconduct.”

However, while the case has since been taken over by the Force Headquarters in Abuja, the autopsy conducted to ascertain the cause of the death obtained by our correspondent in Ilorin, has become a subject of another round of dispute between the police and the family.

The autopsy was carried out in the presence of the deceased’s elder brother, Jimoh Ismail Ayodeji, a pathologist, Dr Ismail Olayiwola, CSP Emmanuel Johnson and Insp. Kamaldeen Muhammed.

The post-mortem, however, contradicted the account of the police that the deceased hung himself inside the cell and the counter allegation by his family that he may have been strangled.

According to the autopsy report, the deceased died from “acute ventricular failure,” a form of sudden heart failure.

“Autopsy findings revealed the cause of death to be acute left ventricular failure due to hypertensive heart disease. The death was natural,” the report conducted on December 27, 2024, at the Kwara State University Teaching Hospital, added.

It was jointly signed by a consultant pathologist and pathology resident, Dr O. L. Lawal and Dr Ismail Olayiwola.

The report confirmed that the deceased was brought in with a rope around his neck but ruled out death from hanging.

“A young man, motionless with rope markings around his neck and a red-coloured cloth, cut into smaller pieces and used to form an improvised rope, was seen around his neck. The pupils were fixed and unresponsive to light. Cardiac and peripheral pulses were absent, and no respiratory movement was noted,” it added.

But speaking on the development, the bereaved family rejected the autopsy and even another one as demanded by the police.

His elder brother, Jimoh Ismail Ayodeji, who spoke on behalf of the family, said he only identified his brother’s corpse when requested and did not agree with the report of the autopsy.

“The police cannot tell me that my brother died a natural death. On Monday, a police homicide team from Abuja called me to come to the headquarters in Ilorin regarding their decision to conduct another autopsy, which we are not ready for.

“When I got there, a police officer at the SIB unit, where my brother died, insisted that he hung himself and that they were not lying. When I was in Abuja for the case, we heard that the autopsy result said he died due to high blood pressure and that it was a natural death. So how can we reconcile all these accounts?” he queried.

He said, “As we speak, could you believe we have not been privy to the result of the first autopsy, we have not seen it and yet they are calling for another one that they want to place the two side by side for comparison. How does that work?

“To us, there is no autopsy for now until they provide us the first result. Why would they be hiding it from us?

“We are suspecting foul play in all of these and therefore not comfortable with the results that the deceased died a natural death.

“My brother was not sick, and we don’t have any history of hypertension in our family.”

He added that because of the suspicion surrounding the issue, the family decided to take the case to court.

Reacting, the police high command explained that there is a need to conduct another autopsy because some members of the family have rejected the one earlier conducted.

In an interview with one of our correspondents in Abuja, the spokesman of the force, Olumuyiwa Adejobi, said after conducting the autopsy, an analysis would also be done on it.

Adejobi, an assistant commissioner of police, told Daily Trust that Nigerians would be kept abreast of the matter even if the policemen are indicted regarding the case.

“They will do an analysis of the autopsy report. After they do the analysis, and then the police will speak officially.

“Now, some members of the family did not accept the autopsy. So, there’s a need for us to go and re-do the autopsy. That’s why we’ve been waiting for this long. It’s important for us to take note of that.

“Nobody is trying to sweep anything under the carpet. All the parties must be carried along and they must be aware of whatever we are doing. We have been open enough about it.

“The IGP as a person has taken up the case for a very long time because we went there on December 2nd last year, and he had promised that there will be justice.

“But suddenly, we discovered that some bloggers were just writing what they liked about it. The autopsy report has not been given to anybody; it’s not in the public domain for now because we have not even done analysis.

“But we are going to do the analysis. The family will have been contacted again for the second time. And I was told again, some of them are still saying they don’t want to do the autopsy the second time. So, I wouldn’t know.

“Whatever it is, the public will be kept abreast of the situation. If the policemen were indicted, people would know. If they are not, people will know. But the autopsy is a major thing to decide this matter; to know the circumstances, to unravel the mystery surrounding the deaths of the student. That’s the situation,” Adejobi added.

As the parties continue to trade blame and demand justice, the court is now at the centre of the controversy to deliver judgment on the matter.