

Dreams, hope, 'drilled' to death

• Armed robbers kill security guard with drilling machine, dash family expectations

HE was a night guard, a good one too, as the late 32-year-old Idowu Ajimosu's colleagues later said.

He was also a 400-level part-time Banking and Finance student at the Lagos State University (LASU), Anthony Campus, Ikorodu Road, Lagos, where he had steadily proven he was a brilliant student.

He lived at No. 4, Aderibigbe Street, Ikosi, Ketu, Lagos, which was convenient for him to go to work as well as school.

Idowu, the first son of Pa Gabriel and Madam Ibukun Ajimosu, left his parents at Igbo-nla in Ilaje Local Council of Ondo State in 1987 and took up the job of a security man at Total Filling Station, Tipper Bus Stop, Ketu, opposite Ketu Police Station, Lagos State.

He did not consider the job lowly as one of his friends told *The Guardian*: "Idowu knew what he was doing. He did not mind as he often spoke about when in the not-too-distant future he would be working as a banker, leaving the present hardship behind.

"He also thought often about his family and how he prayed to be able to give his parents and siblings the comfort they now lacked."

But all that would never ever come to pass.

His friend continued: "While alive, Idowu was a gentle and caring person. The pillar of the Ajimosu family, he sponsored his two siblings, Banjo and Peju through primary and post-primary school.

"His ageing parents believed so much in Idowu's promises to bring succour to the family and to put an end to their suffering.

"Now all those dreams and hopes have been dashed."

Those dreams died in the early hours of Thursday, July 26, 2007.

The young man had left home on Wednesday, July 25 for school and, later in the evening, reported for duty as usual at the filling station.

On resumption, he performed routine duties and afterwards, picked up some of his textbooks to read as he had an examination the following morning.

In the wee hours of Thursday, tragedy struck as men of the underworld who were allegedly dressed in Police uniform and bullet-proof jackets arrived the premises, identifying themselves as bonafide police officers.

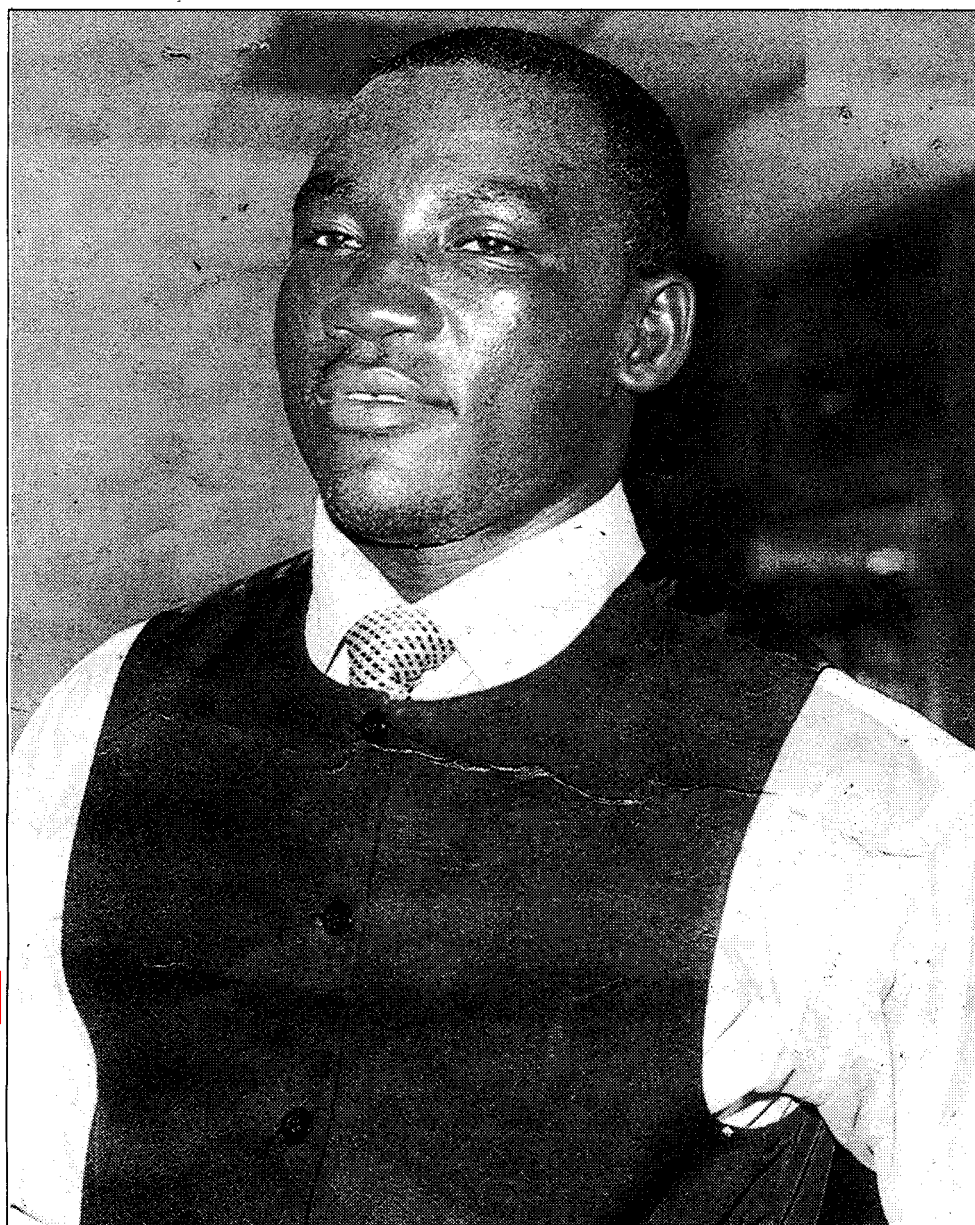
Meanwhile, the gunmen had attacked a fast food company situated right behind the filling station. But, they did not kill or injure anybody. Then, they came to the filling station.

According to one of the night guards on duty at the filling station that fateful day: "The gunmen, who approached the filling station under the pretext that they were members of a police patrol team, identified themselves as true police officers on night patrol.

"They asked about the number of guards on duty and we told them that we were only two, excluding Idowu who was preparing for an examination that day.

"Having realised the number of men on duty, they ordered us, at gun point, to surrender ourselves and whatever we had. We complied.

"They tied us up and locked us in one of the rooms in the premises.



• Ajimosu

By Alex Oliseh and Akanni Abayomi

"From where we were tied, we kept hearing gun shots at intervals of a few minutes. Then there was more sustained gunfire followed by absolute silence for about 10 to 20 minutes", he said.

He continued: "By our calculation, we believed they had left the premises. Then, we came out of the room. But unknown to us, Idowu had been killed, while we were tied up in the room."

The incident was reported at the Ketu Police Station. It was assigned to the Divisional Crime Officer, one Mr. Adeyinka, for investigation.

Thus, Idowu Ajimosu died along with his hopes and aspirations and was buried on Friday, August 3 at Aгенуwa Compound, Owode Elede Bus Stop, Ikorodu Road.

A break came in the puzzle as to who the armed robbers were when on Thursday, August 9, some men suspected to be the bandits were arrested in their hideout at Akonimodo in Mile 12 area of Lagos State by the Anti-robbery

Squad from Ketu Police Station.

Three of them, Yinka Shipa, Sunday Shaun-Paul and Pagbon were identified while the other two suspects, still at large, have been declared wanted by the police.

A few days later, they were transferred to Special Anti-robbery Squad Headquarters, Oduduwa, Ikeja.

On interrogation, one of them, Yinka Shipa, confessed that the group numbering about 30 used a hand-drill to cut open Idowu's heart, when their bullets could not harm him.

Another of the suspects claimed his group had been terrorising the area for a long time before the killing of Idowu Ajimosu.

But Idowu's neighbours who sought anonymity said they are worried.

"This is a very clear case of armed robbery and murder and the laws are clear as to what should follow.

"But the Nigeria Police is not predictable. We do not want to see Idowu's killers walking freely on the streets soon and having an opportunity to rob others".

Reacting to the robbery and killing, the State Police Commissioner, Alhaji Mohammed Abubakar has identified more black spots in the metropolis and has ordered increased patrol and surveillance of those areas.

The spokesman of the State Police Command, Bode Ojajuni confirmed the incident and Idowu's murder by armed robbers.

He said the spots would be put under tight security as a substantial number of policemen, including men of the police mobile units who were recently withdrawn from private individual homes are deployed to such places.

The additional manpower will help in realising the ongoing crime fighting strategy as well as increasing police visibility on streets and ultimately help in policing the metropolis.

He said the results of efforts by the police would soon be evident following the ongoing raids on criminal hideout.

The State Police Command, he says, has arrested 8,609 street urchins and hoodlums and charged 6,812 to court most of who bagged jail terms raging between three to six months.

Also, a total of 99 suspected armed robber were arrested while 13 were killed in gun duels with the police.

A source in the Police Command told *The Guardian* that the police decided to shift their onslaught to hideouts and black spots, many of which can be found in the Ketu area where Idowu was killed.

"It is in such hideouts that the armed robbers and hoodlums gather to smoke Indian hemp and plan to unleash terror on Lagosians, petrol stations, banks and hotels," he said.

In January this year, an engineer and employee of a multi-national communication firm, Mrs Clementina Saduwa was killed on Apogbon Bridge, Lagos while returning from work.

Mrs. Saduwa, who was coming back from office located in Victoria Island, was attacked and killed by hoodlums on the bridge at about 8.30 pm.

Armed robbers had lately severely struck in several areas of the Lagos metropolis leaving behind a trail of huge losses and deaths.

In May, a gang of armed robbers stormed Shogunle area of Oshodi in an attack that residents said lasted three hours.

They robbed their victims one house after the other.

An eight-year old girl was shot to death by robbers as she tried to flee.

The same pattern was repeated in Mafoluku by another gang said to have been more than 30 in number.

Cash, jewelry, electronic equipment and other valuables were carted away by the robbers who also shot dead four people.

A little over a month ago, armed robbers waylaid a bullion van along the Okota-Oke-Afa Road in the Isolo area of the metropolis.

They hijacked the safe in which an undisclosed amount of cash was being transferred, leaving three policemen dead.

A few weeks ago, a gang attacked a first generation bank on Adesina Road, Ijesha, Surulere. They killed a security guard and made away with lots of money.