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Friday, September 19, 2008

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NEWS

National
 Metro
 Africa
 World
 Business

OPINION

Editorial
 Columnists
 Contributors
 Letters
 Cartoons
 Discussions
 Outlook

SPORTS

Home
 Abroad
 Golf Weekly
 Results

FEATURES

Focus
 Policy & Politics
 Arts
 Media
 Science
 Natural Health
 Law
 Education
 Weekend
 Friday Review
 Executive Briefs
 Fashion
 Food & Drink
 Auto Wheels
 Friday Worship
 Saturday Magazine
 Sunday Magazine
 Ibru Ecumenical
 Centre
 Agro Care

BUSINESS SERVICES

Property
 Appointments
 Money Watch
 Market Report
 Capital Market
 Business Travels
 Maritime Watch
 Industry Watch
 Energy Report

Killing of a 'gentleman', 'servant worker'

By Marcel Mbamalu and Alex Olise

HIS wife and children had been away and had returned to the country only about 24 hours before.

As he drove home from work in his Ford Explorer Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV) that late Wednesday evening, he must have been thinking of happy, family things and looking forward to sharing the companionship of his wife and children whose company he had missed.

As usual traffic was crawling on the Apapa-Oshodi Expressway which the assailants who had been trailing him on a motorcycle capitalised on.

They stopped close to his side and shot him point blank and rode away.

The Ford Explorer, a powerful car went out of control as the man's now-lifeless hands slipped off the steering wheel.

The vehicle later stopped and passers-by as well as curious motorists gazed at the lifeless body of a young man.

The time was about 8.30 pm.

Late yesterday afternoon, The Guardian unearthed the identity of the man .

He was Mr. Niyi Ashilokun, a general manager in a trading company where he had worked for the past 14years.

The late Ashilokun was killed by suspected assassins while returning from work.

A worker in the company who spoke on grounds of anonymity said the victim " enjoyed cordial relationship with colleagues and worked single-mindedly for the good of the company."

Describing the circumstances surrounding Ashilokun's death as " shrouded in mystery," a source at the company, said the victim had not been using the SUV until that Wednesday he was killed. He was said to have left his official car for use of his wife and children, who returned from an overseas trip only the previous day.

"I am one of the drivers in the company and we deal in furniture, marbles and tiles. He started working for the company a long time ago; so, they made him the general manager.

" This morning, one of our workers called our managing director to tell him what has happened.

"They told him his General Manager was dead.

He normally came with his official car to work. I heard that the children travelled overseas for holiday and came back two days ago. So, he asked the driver to use the official car for school run. This is why he went to work with the Ford. He didn't normally drive the Ford, except on Sundays.

He was very hard working; I have never seen a person that worked like that in my entire life. He was totally dedicated to the job.

"And his word was his bond. He neither compromised nor cheated. I saw him last on Saturday at the office. I was expecting his call this morning but he never called. The next thing I heard is that he was dead."

According to the source, there was no form of threat to the victim's life before the incident. He had worked with the company for a very long time and there was no form of rivalry. Nobody struggled with him for anything. He did not drag anything



with anybody; he merely worked for the growth of the company when the managing director was not around, he took over."

Another worker Lekan Jimoh described the late Ashilokun as " a gentleman, who was a great asset to the company."

He said some officials of the company would go to the home of the deceased, somewhere in Akute, Ifo Local Council, Ogun State, to commiserate with the wife and children.

Doubting the possibility of the killing being carried out by assassins, he said: " Any one who knew Niyi will tell you he had no enemies.

" He was a servant-worker. He hadn't stopped coming to work one day because of any issue. Everyday he started early and closed late and the time he was shot he was actually returning from work. "

The Police in Lagos also confirmed the identity of the victim, Niyi Asholokun, saying they have commenced investigations into the murder.

The State Police spokesman, Mr. Frank Mba , a Superintendent of Police (SP) confirmed that police authorities would brief the family of the victim.

The man was suspected to have been trailed by his assailants who shot him at close range. He died on the spot .

His vehicle a Ford Explorer , marked KA 751AA-A was intact as nothing inside was removed by his killers.

The police spokesman also said that N13,000.00 cash, a laptop and mobile telephone were found inside the car.

"The fact that everything was intact suggests it was a murder case. The assailants were not armed robbers.

"We are still trying to unravel the mystery behind the killing and also making efforts to discuss certain issues with his immediate family.

" The death of such a young man is regrettable May God grant his family the fortitude to bear the loss."

The case has meanwhile been transferred to the state Criminal Investigation Department (SCID) Panty who are expected to give further details today, as well as brief the family on the outcome of preliminary investigations.

His death reminds Lagos resident of other cases of gruesome murder in the State Metropolis.

The first was the murder of late board member of ThisDay Newspapers Mr. Paul Abayomi Ogundeji who was shot by yet to be identify gunmen at Dopemu area of the state Police are stil grappling with the investigation into the murder of late Ogundeji.

Also last Saturday, suspected robbers attacked and robbed four shops at the Afariogun area of Oshodi and shot a man dead.

During the incident the entire Oshodi was thrown into panic following the sound of gun shots.

Series of robberies and armed attacks within Lagos metropolis is giving the State Police Command concern.

Security experts who spoke to The Guardian, said the influx of arm must be responsible as large arm now in circulation are still with unqualify persons.

"Guns are meant to be use by security operatives and not civilians if not well check the country will be heading to danger as people now use gun at will," he said.

The Oshodi, Isolo, Apapa expressway where the latest incident happened has been identified by police as a major black spot in Lagos State.

Those driving along the route do so in fear as gunmen often emerge from nowhere and start shooting , attacking vehicles and commuters.

The former Editorial Board Chairman of ThisDay Newspapers , late Godwin Agbroko was killed while coming from office on December 22, 2006 at about 10.30 p.m as was another board member Abayomi Ogundeji, a few weeks ago.

The Inspector General of Police Mr. Mike Okiro had last week directed all State Commands to rise up to the challenge of curbing armed banditry in their various areas.

The Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG) Zone 2, Alhaji Mohammed Abubakar

who also spoke to The Guardian yesterday in his office said the zone will ensure adequate security as the festive seasons draw closer.

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