



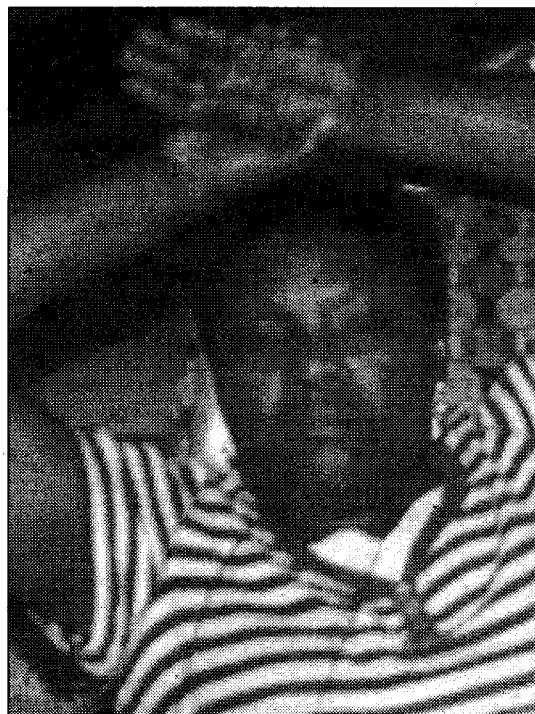
THE METROSECTION

...And the chief dies over fuel

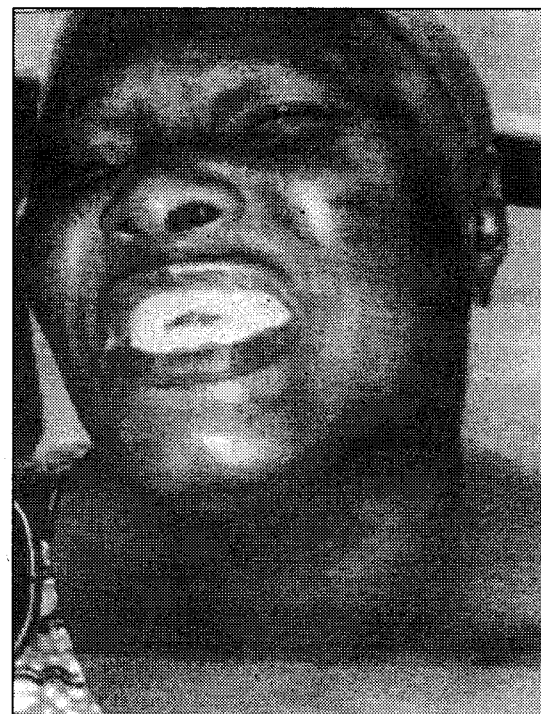
• A disagreement at a fuel station results in the death of a 72-year-old man



• The late Komolafe



• His battered wife



• His mother-in-law whose teeth were broken

WHEN the 72-year-old Raheem Komolafe, who was the Chairman, DHL courier firm, was at a filling station, in Imo area of Ilesa, in Osun State on November 15, 2009, to fuel his vehicle amidst a large crowd, little did he know death was trailing him.

The lingering fuel scarcity had forced the low and high people of the society to join the long queue. The DHL boss in the company of his wife, the mother-in-law and driver, did not mind his status but joined others on the queue, patiently waiting for his turn.

But the turn of event came when an alleged senior government official drove in with his convoy.

His attempt to jump the queue was met by tough resistance from other motorists together with Komolafe.

The government official with his convoy was alleged to have rained blows on the motorists, including Komolafe.

An eyewitness who preferred anonymity alleged: "The occupants of the vehicles were trying to jump the queue but the angry motorists along with Komolafe resisted, saying such action was unfair to those that had been waiting for hours at the filling station."

Komolafe, who was returning from Ifewara, where his wife was conferred with a chieftaincy title, *Yeyemeso* was said to have been hit on the head and neck.

He was later taken to a London hospital where he received treatment until last week, when he died.

Some concerned citizens in the state greeted his death with spontaneous reactions, as the family of the deceased amid tears, narrated the circumstances that led to the death of their breadwinner to the paramount ruler of the town, the *Owa Obokun* of Ijesaland, Oba Gabriel Adekunle Aromolaran in his palace in the presence of his chiefs and community leaders.

The monarch, who sympathised with the bereaved family, said the matter was beyond what the palace

From Tunji Omofoye, Osogbo

alone could handle and asked them to report the matter to the police.

But the alleged suspect was said to have absconded from the vicinity of his office and residence as at Friday.

Some residents alleged the suspect was hiding to avoid public anger.

When *The Guardian* visited the deceased family house at Egbedi Street, the mood was largely gloomy while sympathisers thronged the place to express their condolences to the extended family members. Youths were seen in groups in the neighbourhood discussing the death of Komolafe.

The aged, especially those whose survival was said to have depended on the deceased's generosity, were weeping and raining curses on those responsible for the death of their benefactor.

A family member, Mrs. Odunayo Ayeni, said that on the fateful day, Komolafe, his wife, mother-in-law and others who accompanied them to the chieftaincy event the previous day were only preparing to return to Lagos when the assailants descended on them.

At the family compound on Sunday, Komolafe's elder sister, Madam Anike Fajuke, who fought back tears, told *The Guardian*: "The wicked and evil people have dealt a fatal blow on us. The glory, the star and the beautiful flower in our family has been taken away from us."

According to her, Oba Aromolaran told them that he had no control over the matter since it had to do with murder but appealed to the bereaved family to take the matter to the police and court or leave it in the hand of God.

Besides the attack on Komolafe, Madam Fajuke also alleged the deceased wife was also attacked while they were on their way together with her late brother to report the attack at Ijamo Police Station in Ilesa. According to her, some fierce-looking men pounced on Komolafe's wife and inflicted injuries

on her.

Madam Fajuke alleged the plank which the assailant used to hit Komolafe on the day of the attack was mystical, adding that anybody who was unfortunate to be attacked with the object.

She said other family members who protested the attack received threat messages.

Corroborating Madam Fajuke's claim, another family, the Agboola Obadares, living at KPK12, Ogunbiyi Street, Oke-Opo, in Ilesa had also petitioned the police authorities, alleging that a physical attack on their father by the same group was responsible for his death.

The family in their letter entitled: "Murder of Agboola Obadare", alleged that the death of their father on November 12, 2009, was due to the beating with dangerous weapons by the group on November 11, 2009.

Ever since the incident occurred, the children alleged their father had been in and out of hospital until November 11, when he finally died. They alleged his death was as a result of the head injury he sustained during the attack.

The police took up the challenge but it was a rowdy event as some journalists who came to cover the event from within and outside the state were rough-handled.

An eyewitness alleged to *The Guardian* that Komolafe's SUV was among other vehicles vandalised during the attack.

Madam Fajuke, who was crying for justice over the death of their breadwinner called on the authorities to step into the matter so that Komolafe would not die in vain.

Other concerned citizens have also condemned the murder of Komolafe's and called for proper investigation. They also appealed to the traditional rulers and other influential figures in the state to rise up and condemn the dangerous development to save the citizens from agents of death who are ready to sniff life out of their perceived enemies at the slightest provocation.