

TheMetroSection

Death in a police cell

Another family cries for justice as 25-year-old man, denied bail, dies in Lagos cell

By Seye Olumide

WHEN her husband, Chief John Oluyomi Dilly died last year, his widow, Ganiyat was able to cope, thanks to her children who did their best to console their grieving mother.

Now, the 61-year-old widow is in pains again, because Akindele, one of the pillars she leaned on through the pains of losing her husband, has died in a Lagos police cell under suspicious circumstances.

Now, members of the family suspect foul play, crying that the circumstances behind their son's mysterious death should be unraveled and those involved, brought to book.

They also fear that unless the state governor, the Commissioner of Police, the State House of Assembly and human rights groups step into the matter, suspected moves to cover up the matter might succeed.

With tears in her eyes, Ganiyat told *The Guardian* what transpired that Friday.

"My son was returning and was a stone-throw to our house that Friday, October 7, 2011, when he came to the scene of a naming ceremony.

"Only God knows what happened but a fight ensued between him and some of the people holding the party.

"Being alone, he could not match the strength of the many who attacked him and they beat him to a coma, right there.

"All attempts by sympathisers to rescue him were stopped by one of the celebrants, *Iya Ibeji*, who warned that anybody who tried to help Akindele would be arrested.

"When some people realized that my son's condition was getting worse, they invited policemen from Ijanikin Police Station, telling them that Akindele was caught and beaten when he attempted to rape their twins, Taiye and Kehinde.

"The policemen carried him to the station and locked him up in the cell.

"Efforts by his brothers to secure his bail that night were refused by the police.

"I did not know until the next day, when about 8.00a.m. some members of the family that held the naming ceremony, led by a pastor and *Iya Ibeji*, came to my house.

The pastor said that my son and some of his children fought the previous day and that Akindele was arrested and detained at Ijanikin Police Station. "When we got to the station, they refused to grant him bail.

"The officers on duty gave excuse that the Investigating Police Officer would not resume until 10.00p.m.

"I begged them to call him but they said there was no credit in their phone.

"I offered to buy credit for or call the officer with my phone but they refused, that he would not answer unknown number.

"At that point, the pastor said we should go and come back on Sunday morning, but I refused, insisting to wait till 10.00p.m. when the IPO would resume duty.

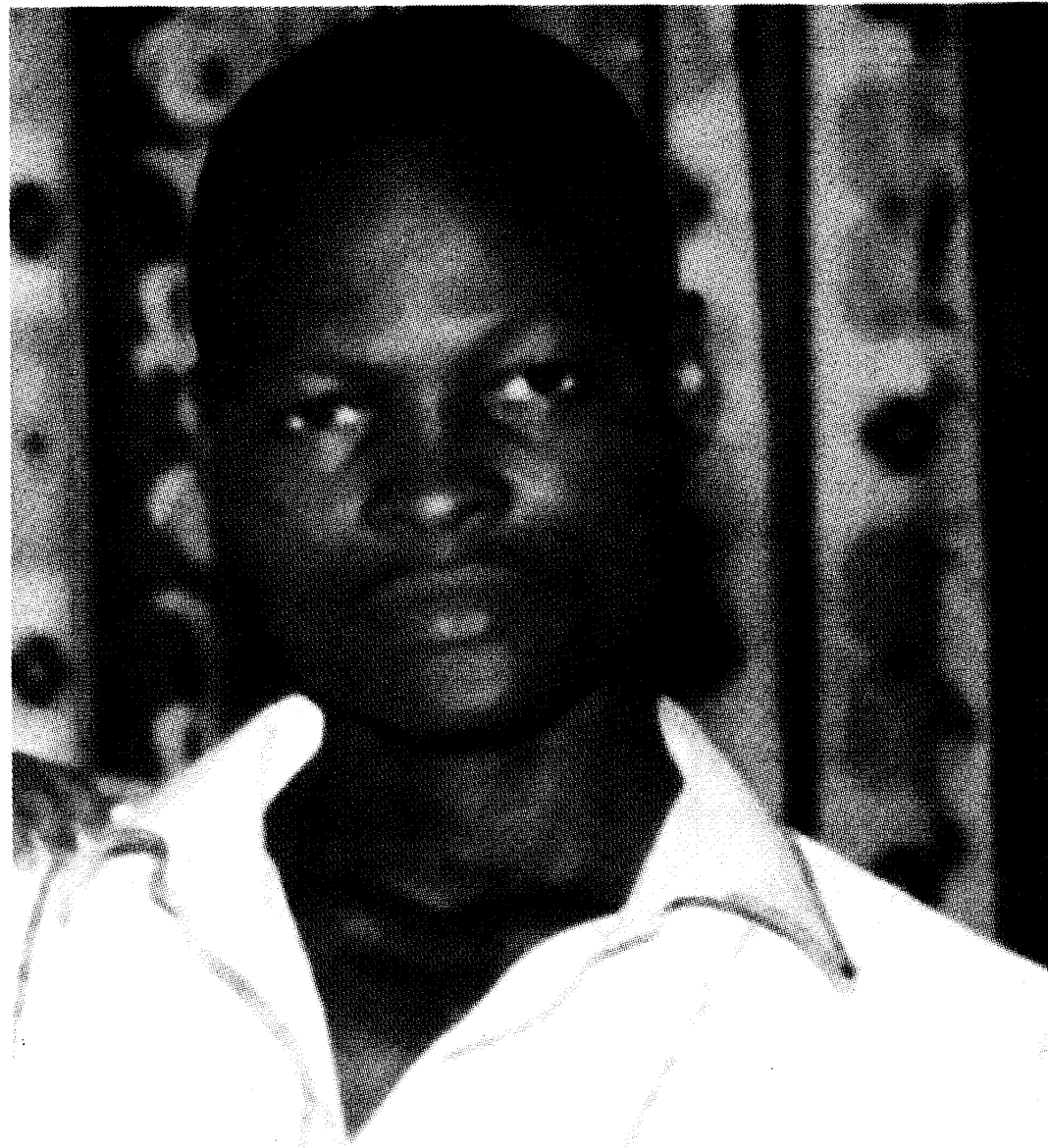
"I was neither allowed to see my son nor bail him. "At 10.00p.m., two of the officers appealed to me to go home and return in the morning.

"On Sunday morning, I got to the station and nothing happened until around 1.00p.m. when the Divisional Police Officer (DPO), a woman, called me into a meeting and told me that Akindele took ill and they took him to Demola Hospital where he died.

"They then warned me not to cry, otherwise, they would not be able to arrest the people that killed him.

"From that station in Ijanikin, I trekked to my sister's house in Aguda Surulere just like a mad woman.

"On Monday, we went to Ijanikin and my sister advised that since the issue happened within the community, I should intimate members of the Community Development Association (CDA) and fortunately for us, we saw



The late Akindele Dilly

four of them who agreed to follow us to the station.

"At the station, when the officers were still trying to play pranks, two of the CDA members identified themselves as retired Naval Officers and demanded that the proper thing be done, otherwise they would take the matter up.

"The police officers promised to do something but one of the CDA members also advised that we should go to the king's palace to brief him about the incident and we did. The ruler told me to come back the following day.

"When the news of Akin's death started spreading within the community, *Iya Ibeji* and some of the celebrants ran away.

"On the second day, one of the chiefs came to invite me to the palace but when he saw my late husband's picture on the wall, he screamed: "Are you the wife of Chief Oluyomi and is the deceased his son?"

"I answered in affirmative and he said if that was the case, 'justice must be done because your husband was

our friend'."

Despite all the efforts, authorities of Ijanikin Police Station did not take any concrete action until we reported the matter to the Area Commander, Area K, where we were advised to write a petition to the Command from where it was forwarded to Panti Police Station Adekunle, Yaba."

The petition entitled: 'Petition against the murder of our son and brother, Mr. Akindele Dilly at Ijanikin Division Police Station, Ijanikin' tells of the travails 25-year-old Akindele went through before his death in the cell and the role the Police at Ijanikin Police Station played. It was reliably gathered on Friday that some arrests were made even some influential members of the community had determined that those who had a hand in Akindele's death would never go scot-free.

An officer in Panti who did not want to be quoted assured that investigation was going on and those behind the matter would be brought to book.

Briefs

Women group meets

THE 1000 Leaders Women Meeting, with the theme: "Women soft power and leadership: Manifesting the triangle in full splendour", will hold on Thursday, October 27, at NECA House, Alausa, Ikeja, Lagos at 8.00a.m.

Speaker is Mrs. Esther Kingsley Umoh, the chief executive officer of Dazaina Security Services.

Animation training

AFIRM, Web Direct Services is introducing the first of a series of animation classes in January 2012 to train interested Nigerians in the art of cartoon making.

Open Class Project is a yearly Digital New Media training that will empower Nigerians in the areas of cartoon creation, print media design, web design and video animation/editing.

Successful candidates will be taken through basic training to better prepare them for the series of intense training ahead. Field work is also going to be introduced as students will be required to gather their own footage for personal or group projects. At the end of the one-month intensive training, the company will organize a public exhibition to showcase the works of successful candidates to the public.

Violet Obiora passes on

MOTHER of former Minister of Solid Minerals, Prof. Leslye Obiora, Ezinne Ogbuefi Violet Odiso Obiora (nee Nwakuche), has passed on at the age of 78.

An ardent Christian and philanthropist, she was the matriarch of the Obiora and Nwakuche families of Oguta, Imo State. For many years, she lived a blissful life with her late husband, S. B. C. Obiora.

She will be buried on Friday, November 11, 2011 after a funeral service at St. Mary's Cathedral, Anglican Diocese on the Lake Oguta. Eight children survive her.



Obiora

Kelani, 35, passes on

THE death has occurred of Mr. Oladimeji Idris Kelani. He