
Kolade not killed by stray bullets, family insists, demands justice

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CP consoling mother of the deceased.

• Police reveal identities of killers

Since Sunday evening when the story broke, palpable gloom has descended on the homes of the Johnsons, who are left to grieve over the brutal killing of the only son of the family, Kolade, a 36-year-old father of one and graduate of the University of Benin (UNIBEN).

The deceased was a lover of sports and loves to analyze football matches with his friends, reason he left the comfort of his home to enjoy the football commentary in company of his friends that fateful day at a viewing centre; but that was where he met his untimely death at the hands of some policemen attached to the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS).

Left to mourn the deceased is his young wife, a baby and his parents. As sympathizers continued to visit the home of the Johnsons yesterday, time seemed to froze for a moment when the Commissioner of Police, Lagos State command, Zubairu Muazu, paid a condolence visit to the grieving family.

The sight of policemen in the area was expected to elicit some hostility considering the manner in which Kolade was killed, but as if to soften the mood ahead of his visit, the police revealed the identities of officers who killed Kolade Johnson, a Liverpool football fan, on Sunday.



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The death had generated outrage as Nigerians urged the police to parade the officers that killed him and as news and pictures of Inspector Ogunyemi Olalekan and Sergeant Godwin Orji of the Anti Cultism Squad, the alleged officers broke, some nervousness about police attempting to shield the perpetrators fizzled.

The spokesman of the command, Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Bala Elkana named Inspector Ogunyemi Olalekan and Sergeant Godwin Orji of the Anti Cultism Squad as the prime suspects. “The men suspected to have carried out the shooting of Kolade Johnson have been apprehended and are being subjected to police internal disciplinary procedures,” he said.

Immediately, some Nigerians took to Twitter, alleging this was not the first time one of the suspects has indulged in unethical behaviour towards members of the public.

One Oluwasegun Haziz with the handle @hazizsegun posted a series of tweets about his friend’s encounter with “the man with big stomach.” He described the burly suspect as ‘head of NPF Anti-Cultism Department at Charlie Boy, Gbagada (Police) Station,’ where he is allegedly known as ‘Omo Eko’ (Lagos child).

The Lagos police boss, accompanied by the Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of the Department of Finance and Administration, DCP Ayuba Elkanah, Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of Operations, DCP Mohammed Ali, Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of Criminal Investigation Department, DCP Yetunde Longe and other senior officers made the unpleasant visit to soothe the hearts of the grieving parents.



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The Commissioner of Police was received by the head of the deceased’s family, Alhaji Remi Lukman, in their residence at No. 1, Beco Street, Onipetesi, Mangoro, bus-stop. In his remarks, the Commissioner of Police condemned the action of the members of the Anti-Cultism team and reiterated his commitment in ensuring that justice is done in the matter. The CP prayed for the repose of the soul of Kolade Johnson and also prayed that the Almighty God will grant the family, friends and well-wishers the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss.

In his reaction, the head of Johnson’s family expressed gratitude to the CP for honouring the family with his presence and his resolve in ensuring that justice prevails in the case. He commended him for the bold steps taken in exposing those behind the shootings.

“I thought it is going to be a one man’s fight but seeing the police high command joining our family in this fight has shown that justice will not only be done to Kolade but to the entire Nigerian youths. I am glad that we have a new police force, which believes in justice,” he said.

He however noted that Kolade was not killed by stray bullets as widely reported, rather, he was deliberately shot and killed by the trigger-happy cops.

His foster father, Alhaji Remi Lukman, told newsmen that stray bullets couldn't have penetrated Kolade's body twice. He claimed the family has video evidence to prove the deceased and his friends were aimed at by the policemen as against media reports that they mistakenly fired.

Lukman said: "We have been hearing that it was a stray bullet but I must tell you that a stray but cannot penetrate twice. If he had not directed the gun at them two bullets will not touch him. He was the hope of the family and a gentle boy who was very intelligent. All we are asking for is justice and what these people have done to us should be done to them."

The deceased's mother, Mrs. Esther Odebiyi, kept quiet all through the police interaction with the family, ostensibly soaked in sorrow. The family lawyer, Wale Ademoyejo, has however demanded for justice over the gruesome murder of the 2012 University of Benin Business Management and Economics graduate.

Ademoyejo told newsmen that the death of Johnson must teach policemen how to use their guns. He said: "What we are seeking is justice. Justice not only for the father, not only for the person that was killed but also for the whole community and Nigeria as a whole. Who knows, the Commissioner of Police in Lagos could be the Inspector General tomorrow. They should start from now to reorient the police on how to use guns.

"If you look at the Nigerian armed forces, they don't use gun anyhow and they could use the gun. They are trained to kill but they do not use it except it is absolutely necessary with order from above."



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