

# TV station confirms death of reporter ‘arrested by Lagos task force’ during #EndSARS violence

By **Jesutomi Akomolafe**  
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Pelumi Onifade, a 20-year-old reporter with Gboah TV, who was allegedly arrested by officers attached to the Lagos State Task Force, has been found dead.

The management of the online TV channel yesterday confirmed the death of its reporter who has been missing since Saturday, October 24.

Onifade, a 200-level student of the Department of History at Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun State, was an intern with Gboah TV. He was reportedly taken away by the task force on October 24 while covering an attack by a mob at a government facility despite wearing a jacket showing he was working as a reporter.

In a statement, the medium said Onifade was covering the scene of a mob attack at a government facility in the Oko Oba axis of Agege Local Government Area when operatives of the task force stormed the scene and engaged hoodlums who attempted to loot palliatives at the Ministry of Agriculture store in the Abattoir area of the state.



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Pelumi was wounded during the task force duel with the miscreants who hijacked the #EndSARS protests against police brutality. The TV station also claimed the wounded reporter was taken away by the men of the task force and “was later found dead at Ikorodu mortuary after days of searching all police stations and meeting with the Lagos State Task Force.”

The statement partly read: “It has been confirmed that the Gboah TV staff, ‘Onifade Pelumi,’ arrested by the Lagos State Task Force at the Ministry of Agriculture, Abattoir, Agege, is dead. The police are currently investigating the matter and have assured the management, the family, and the community that the investigation would be thorough and swift.

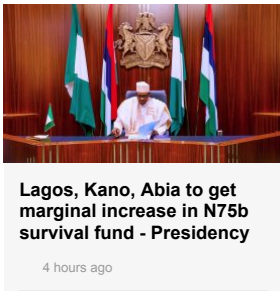
“Onifade Pelumi died while covering the scenes at the site of the palliative storage centre. He will be deeply missed.”

Chairman of the task force, Yinka Egbeyemi, when contacted said the matter has been forwarded to the Commissioner of Police, Hakeem Odumosu. “Please contact the PPRO for insights on the matter. The case is under investigation and it has been transferred to the Commissioner of Police,” Egbeyemi said.

The Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) in the state, Muiyiwa Adejobi, however, asked for more time to seek information on the incident.



Meanwhile, the family of Onifade has demanded justice from the Lagos State government, Inspector-General of Police, and the Commissioner of Police in the state over the killing of their son.



A family member of the deceased, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, called for an investigation into the circumstances surrounding his death and urged the Inspector-General of Police, Mohammad Adamu, to ensure that police officer involved in the killing of Onifade were brought to book.

He said: “On 24th of October, 2020, there was a crowd in a compound at Oko-Oba, Agege. Onifade Pelumi and his colleague were sent as media personnel to know what exactly was going on in that area. While in an interview with the residents, they said, ‘we are hungry, we want soldiers to leave so we can carry our food, this food is for COVID-19.’

“Apparently, they believed the COVID-19 palliative was stored in a warehouse close to the compound. During the interview, task force officers came with cutlasses, throwing bottles and shooting live bullets as they attacked the crowd. Out of fear, the crowd, including Onifade Pelumi, ran for their lives. In a short while, his colleague saw that Pelumi had already been injured and was being carried by four task force officers into their van (Black Maria), his colleague tried to defend him by showing his ID card and making them understand that he was putting on a GBOAH TV jacket, they threatened him with a cutlass and cocked their gun at him.

“A thorough search was conducted from police stations to prisons all over Lagos State for four days (October 24 to 27) after which a ‘missing person’ graphic was shared across all social media platforms to aid the search. That same evening of Tuesday, October 27, the head of the task force called, saying he saw the post, and they agreed to meet us on Wednesday, October 28 at the State Headquarters, Ikeja.

“After the meeting with the task force, the officer that led the squad said they arrested five people at the Ministry of Agriculture Abattoir, Oko-Oba, Agege, but one person died and they have dumped his body at Ikorodu mortuary. They scheduled a meeting for Thursday to confirm if his name was on the list of those arrested, if not they would go to the mortuary at Ikorodu to confirm. Due to the public holiday on Thursday, the appointment was rescheduled for Friday.



“On Friday morning, we got to Ikorodu and behold, it was Pelumi Onifade’s corpse. At age 20, he was the breadwinner of his family that consisted of his father, mother, and two younger sisters.

“We are asking for these four points agenda; whoever pulled the trigger must be identified and prosecuted accordingly. In the absence of the culprit, the person who led the squad must be held responsible and prosecuted. The family of Onifade Pelumi should be compensated and we demand a public apology from the Lagos State Government and Lagos State Police Command.”

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