

3 Navy probe alleged beating of civilian staff to death in Lagos

By Odita Sunday

• Family alleges cover up

THE Nigeria Navy (NN) High command has commenced investigation into the death of a civilian staff in their facility in Lagos.

Spokesperson for the Navy, Commodore Adams Aliu, who lamented the death of the personnel, noted that the navy wants to ascertain if it was the altercation he had with a personnel that caused the death.

The family of Richard Onumegbu had demanded justice after he was allegedly beaten to death by four naval officers.

According to a family source, Onumegbu, a civilian staff at the Ministry of Defence in Lagos State, was reportedly targeted by the officers at the instigation of a woman who regularly bullied him.

Despite working in the ministry's laboratory for 15 years, Richard reportedly faced relentless harassment from the woman.

When he reportedly con-

fronted her on March 26, she called the officers who brutally attacked him, resulting in his death after four days on Easter Sunday, March 31.

The family claimed the Navy withheld information about their investigation into the case.

The family source said: "Richard Onumegbu was a civilian staff of the Nigerian Ministry of Defence. He worked there for 15 years and devoted his life to that ministry. He worked in the laboratory.

"Unfortunately, he did not come home on March 26, 2024. His family and his sister with whom he lived were concerned, unaware that Richard was being beaten and abused for seven hours.

He was beaten from 8:00p.m. on March 26 to 1:00a.m. on March 27.

"His crime was that he likes to take care of dogs. One of his bosses was not there and

left his dog with Onumegbu. After work, Onumegbu went to take care of the dogs, as usual.

"There is a certain lady who lives on the complex who always bullies Onumegbu. Every time she sees him, she calls him 'dog boy'.

"That day he decided to stand up for himself and told her he had had enough of her bullying.

"They had some altercations and the lady tried to hit him but he tried to defend himself and because he was a man, he had the upper hand but he didn't hit this lady.

"Because of the whole back and forth, Onumegbu pinned the lady to the ground and asked her to apologise to him before he could let her go. She understood that she had wronged him, apologised and he let her go. He never laid his hand on the lady.

"Unknown to him, the lady went to mobilise and returned with five naval offi-

cers. They got there and four of them started abusing him without listening to his side of the story. They kicked him, punched him and beat him.

"They beat him so badly that he was covered in sores and swollen. Sadly, his family received a call on Easter Sunday informing them that he had passed away.

"To show how much he loved the Navy and his job, he still went to work with the bruises on his body and died on the job.

"Jungle justice is what they did to him. They took away the joy of the family. They took away a promising young man who had so much to give. All we want is justice.

"We want justice. The Nigerian Navy abandoned him while he was alive. It seems like this matter is being swept under the rug. They hide details about how far they go in interrogating the people who committed this act."