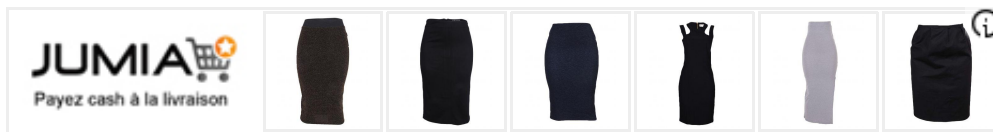




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Enugu CID detains corpse of businessman murder by military man



By **Nkasiobi Oluikpe** -

Correspondent, Lagos

The recklessness, brutality and abuse of force uniform, was once again displayed at Zik Avenue, Enugu, when a military man allegedly head butted an elderly man to death while the Enugu State Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Homicide Department, has withheld the corpse from family members since Friday, September 19, 2014.

Mike Amaechi Ohanwe, now deceased, was said to be driving home from his business with a nephew of his, by name Ogochukwu, along Zik Avenue Enugu, when a man on military uniform hit him with his motorcycle from the back.

According to Chukwudi Ohanwe, son of the deceased, Ogochukwu asked Ohanwe if he did realise he was hit by someone from behind. Ohanwe responded by telling Ogochukwu, he didn't want any trouble with those



The late Ohanwe

people.

Ironically, the military man doubled crossed Ohanwe and ordered him to park and come down. Ohanwe parked and asked Ogochukwu to remain in the vehicle. Looking through the rear mirror, Ogochukwu said he saw the military man pulling Ohanwe by the collar and head butting him. Thereafter, Ohanwe started shaking and staggering.

Since the event occurred opposite Zenith Bank on Zik's Avenue, Enugu, some mobile police men on duty at the bank crossed over to wade into the case. One of the mobile policemen by name Shuaibu, came over to copy the vehicle registration number of Ohanwe.

Ogochukwu, now forced to leave the vehicle, said he asked the military man: "Why are you fighting and head butting a man that is old enough to be your father. Are you not aware there is a legislation that motorbikes shouldn't be riding in Enugu State?"

Shuaibu was said to have hushed Ogochukwu, telling him that he was trying to add fuel to a case that he (Shuaibu) was already resolving. That if he was not careful, he will arrest him.

One of the crowd that gathered, by name Sunday and owner of a business centre around the scene, interrupted and told Shuaibu that the military man in

question had no name tag, that he could even be a criminal or rogue on military uniform, hence, should be the one to be arrested.

It was at that point that the crowd were said to have revolted against Shuaibu for demanding for Ohanwe's vehicle particulars.

After conversing in Igala language with the military man, Shuaibu allowed the man to mount his motorbike and disappear. Less than five minutes after the military man left, Ohanwe, who was now leaning on Ogochukwu's shoulder inside his vehicle gave up.

On seeing that the man was dead, Shuaibu and his men retired back to Zenith Bank. When called upon to come help carry the man to the hospital, they said, they were not coming, that they are already at their duty post.

The wife was phoned to come carry her husband to the hospital. On getting to the Eastern Nigerian Medical Centre, he was confirmed dead by the doctor on duty.

Meanwhile, the Divisional Crime Officer (DCO) of Uwani Police Station, Mr. Longinus, ordered the arrest of four people at the scene of the incident, including Ogochukwu, who was termed their principal witness. Mother of Chinonso, one of the three other arrested suspects, according to Chukwudi Ohanwe, allegedly paid the sum of N9,500 to Mr. Longinus for the release of the three suspects.

Subsequently, the first son of the deceased, Chukwudi, was called upon by his family members. Here is his story:

"I got a call on Friday, September 19, 2014, that my dad was dead. I travelled to Enugu on Sunday and thereafter, in the company of two of my uncles, went to the Uwani Police Station where Ogochukwu was being detained since Friday. I asked the police why they had to detain him and if the military man who killed my dad had been arrested. They said he was out of reach. I asked if they have arrested the mobile policemen at Zenith Bank, they said those ones were not running. We had to bail Ogochukwu that night, with the sum of N2,000. The police then told us to conduct an autopsy as the case is a state matter.

“It was thereafter, that my mother told me, she needed us to withdraw the case that we don’t have what it takes to follow it up. On Monday, September 22, I was at Enugu CID, requesting to see the CP. While there, I discovered that the so called state matter hasn’t gotten to the CP. He was unaware of it. Subsequently, the state CID took over the case and started investigation.

“Right now, the problem is that for the past five months, the case is still being investigated and nothing has come out of it. When I went back to the state CID towards the end of November, two of the policemen heading the homicide department, Chinonso and Idika, passively asked me for money for logistics. I told them that they said it is a state matter, how then can we be sponsoring a state matter, that we don’t have that kind of money.

“So, I had to tell him I don’t understand the ground on which to compensate him, that he was not giving me a feedback and secondly, that I don’t even know what they were doing. But notwithstanding, I gave Idika N4,000, because that same day we were to meet the chief pathologist who was to conduct the autopsy, so as to serve him the corona’s paper for the autopsy.

“When we met the pathologist, he said he was going to collect N150,000 (one hundred and fifty thousand). We told him we don’t have such money that we have been spending all these while, that there are still a whole lot of things yet to be done for the burial. Five months after, there is nothing progressive about the case, why throw away N150,000.

“We have been paying lawyer’s charges and filing this and that, which has taken a whole lot of money. So, it didn’t make any sense to me. Subsequently, we demanded that the corpse of our father be released to us. We want to be granted access to his body so that we can lay him to rest.

“That was when the deputy commissioner of police in Enugu State told us that it is not done, that they cannot release the corpse of my father to us without the autopsy. For me, what are we trying to prove with the autopsy, when the police have been shielding the perpetrators of the murder, why do we need an autopsy. Basically, if it is a state matter as they said, why are we meant to pay the cost of autopsy?

“We were invited by the General Officer Commanding (GOC) at 82 Division and the provost commander, Mr. Ibrahim told us about his keenness in finding the culprit but up till now, he has not been able to do that. As I am talking to you now, Ibrahim has been transferred to Ibadan.

“Meanwhile, the last time Shuaibu was invited to the state CID for questioning, he denied ever having any conversation with my dad or the military man, saying he just came around at the scene of the incident, spent less than 10 minutes and resumed to his duty post. He even denied setting his eyes on Ogochukwu but acknowledged being able to identify the military man if found.

But the same Shuaibu confided with Idika that he had to make those denials because our petition was incriminating. That if he had agreed to having spoken to my dad or the military man, he will be charged for negligence.

Lawyer to the deceased family, Barrister Offorkansi of Awforkansi Chambers, Zik Avenue, Enugu indicated that it is not within his power to release Ohanwe’s corpse to the family since he didn’t die a natural death. He then referred *Saturday Independent* to the Enugu State Police Public Relations Office, who on several occasions promised to reach the homicide department and revert to *Saturday Independent*.

At the last minute, the state PPRO stopped taking calls from *Saturday Independent*.

The Ohanwe family is pleading that the corpse of their father be released to them for burial, as detaining the corpse by the police, appears not to yield any positive result.

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