

## FEATURE

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# How Amotekun Operatives Killed Our Breadwinner – Family Alleges

● Appeals For Government Intervention ● We Have No Hands In His Death – Commandant ● Oyo Assembly Sets Up Adhoc Committee To Investigate

The sudden death of a fatherless teenager, Peter Okafor, who was allegedly shot dead by Amotekun Operatives has continued to trigger reactions especially by residents of Mokola community in Ibadan. It would be recalled that Peter, a casual worker with a publishing company was reportedly killed on Wednesday 18th August 2021 at Uncle Joe Area of Mokola Ibadan, the Capital City of Oyo State.

Speaking with Saturday INDEPENDENT on Friday, the elder sister of the deceased, Miss Ogechi Okafor insisted that it was Amotekun Operatives that killed Peter.

"It was the youths that prevented the Amotekun Operatives from carrying his corpse. It was my friends that called my attention to the news that the Amotekun has denied killing my brother. It is a lie," she said.

Narrating her ordeal, Ogechi said her brother's death came like a dream.

"I woke up around 2 am by the repeated bangs on our door by the boy whom my brother went out with to hustle at a printing press as usual. I was thinking the bangs were from the thieves. I started hiding my phones and my mum's. I had to wake our neighbours, but alas, all I was hearing was 'won to pa Peter', meaning they have killed Peter. He was also saying 'Awon Amotekun ti pa Peter,' that is, Amotekun has killed Peter. My mother said but Peter should be at the printing shop by then. I had to leave my mum at home and went to the spot where he was shot. I wanted to carry my brother. I thought when I got there, I would just tap him and he would wake up and follow me home. He was in the pool of his own blood. Before I could do anything, my mother had already fainted so I had to rush to her and by doing so, this same Amotekun van passed beside us. They wanted to go and carry my brother's corpse but those Mokola guys didn't allow them to do so.

"Amotekun also chased other guys that went to buy food together with my brother. They were chased to the shop until they saw the flashlight of their Oga who sent them before they turned back and left the scene that midnight. I also saw the number on that van, it was 012. I cannot lie, I'm not an illiterate. At least I saw what was written on the van. I don't know the reasons why they are lying. They drove at high speed. I saw everything with my own eyes. I carried my own brother with blood and those people are still denying killing him."

Ogechi, who said the brother was doing the casual job to save money for the next JAMB examination explained how loving and brilliant Peter was.

"When my brother was alive, I know the way he used to work at night and come back home in the next morning. He used to save his money with me and out of the token given to him for his service, he used to give my mom little change too. He was very brilliant and has been saving money for his JAMB. He saved the money with me. He has been telling me that he wanted to write JAMB next year. If he was alleged to be a thief, they should have at least arrested him and take him to his school. The Vice-Principal of his school is like a mother to him because of his brilliancy and hard work. She has even promised to adopt him. She was the one that paid for his NECO. She has promised to train him to any level he wished to attain and now they have killed him. They are just complicating the issue for us by saying he was a thief or they're not the one that killed him. They should have come out with



Amotekun with Gov. Makinde

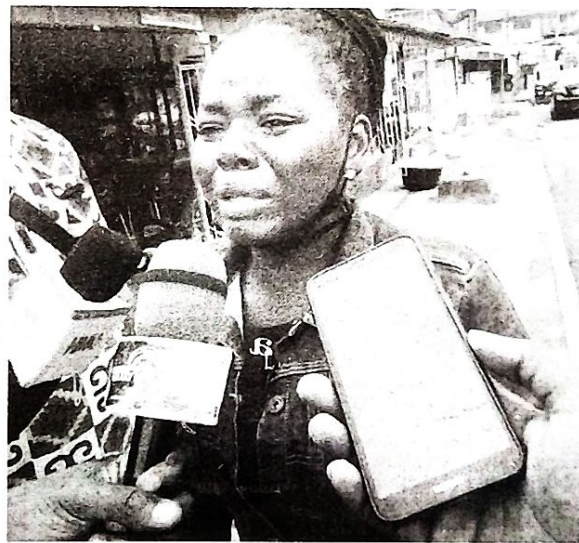
better lies. All these they're saying is so sad."

Chief John Idoko, the head of the family said that the boy was on a night duty. He was with his master in the shop before he was sent on an errand.

"We have heard different stories from the Amotekun that they were actually pursuing some thieves. I can tell you that it is a lie. If they see someone that they want to arrest, they should have at least arrest the person when especially the person is not armed. The boy is a 16-year-old and was not with any arms. He should have been arrested and handed to Police for proper investigations. So, shooting out rightly should not have been the best option for them. I was even briefed that he was showing them what he bought. He was shot unjustly, that is a jungle justice. Amotekun cannot deny the killing. There is no way they can deny the killing. The vehicle number and everything link them to the crime. When the boy was shot, they ran away and later came again after like 15 to 20 minutes, to carry the corpse. If they were not responsible for the killing, why will they come back for the corpse? They were chased by the angry youths of the area who stood firmly that justice must prevail over the killing of the boy."

Idoko is pleading that Oyo State government should intervene in the situation.

"We have not heard anything from the Governor. The Governor needs to address the family. They know what they supposed to do. The killing of innocent people is not the dream of the Governor. Amotekun was introduced for a purpose, and not to be killing all the innocent people. So, I want them to do the needful. The boy is a small boy but at the same time he has Igbo blood in him. He was studying at the same time working, because his father is no more. He had to hustle and struggle because he wanted to go to school. He lost his father barely two years ago, and that pushed him to be hustling by himself so he could assist his moth-



Deceased's sister

er financial wise, and as well for him to achieve his bolted dreams. In the morning, he would go to school and in the night he would go to the printing press to hustle.

"I want the government to help and see that the case is not carpeted. I also plead to the media to follow the case up. What we want from the government is to do the needful. The deceased is the only son of the family so as young as he was, he was the bread winner of the family. The family has no hope again, so the government should do something for the family so they will not feel the pain so much," Chief Idoko said.

Also speaking on the matter, the Aare Atutulo of Ekotodo Chief Kayode Olaye, said he was there to ensure there was peace.

"Those Amotekun came with patrol van and started pursuing those boys and the deceased fell. I saw a

bruise on his leg and they shot him on his head. How can they shot an armless teenager? They should at least arrest him. They pointed the gun on his head and shot him. It was pure brutality, pictures and videos are here to prove that the boy was innocent. He was sent on an errand to buy food by his boss who later rushed down to the scene. So I had to wait to ensure that the youths don't take law into their hands. I was on the ground with the policemen clearing the debris on the road, because the youths actually set burn fire on the road at the Uncle Joe junction leading to the printing press streets. We need to calm those youths down because their reactions could have led to something else. I even followed them to Amotekun office, I stopped the Amotekun from shooting so that the whole issue doesn't become escalated," he said.

However, On Wednesday, in his

reaction to the matter, the state Commandant of the Southwest Security Network codenamed Amotekun Corps, Col. Olayinka Olayanjú Rtd, denied shooting of Peter Okafor by his men.

Col. Olayinka, in a press briefing at the Command Base in Dandaru area of Mokola Ibadan, debunked allegations made by some of the people of the Mokola community.

"The protesters were here at 6.30am and 8am and took the corpse to Secretariat. If you say Amotekun has killed someone, there should be evidence. All our vehicles have peculiar colour and unique number to trace. We have had cases like this in the past and because of the information given to us, we were able to trace.

"On my honour, Amotekun has nothing to do with the incident at Mokola. There are policemen and other private security men guarding the Lotto house and around the area, you can find out if Amotekun vehicle was found around that area. If there is any evidence implicating any of my operative, I assure you, we will not spare them. We don't condone indiscipline and no one will be happy with extra-judicial killing. We are here to protect the people and can't be going against the people," Olayinka said.

A relative of the family, who is also a resident of Mokola, Mr. Emeka Nwagwu said the death was tragic. "We are still mourning his Dad because it is two years plus now we lost the man. The man just left home and up to this moment, we have not heard anything about his whereabouts. The boy later turned around to shoulder the responsibilities of the family. He bore the burden of it all, a young boy going to school at the same time doing a menial job at night."

Nwagwu said it was unfair and too hasty for Amotekun operatives to deny the killing.

"Was their boss who denied the killing actually with the operatives that day? So for me, it was too hasty for them to jump into that conclusion. I also consider it to be insensitive. For him to have spoken like this, it means the man is incompetent, and such action should call for his removal."

The Oyo State House of Assembly during its plenary on Tuesday, August 24, 2021, resolved in setting up an ad-hoc committee to investigate the alleged killing of Peter. The House of Assembly as a move to wade into the controversy, has set up a five-man ad-hoc committee saddled with the responsibility of unraveling what truly transpired with a view to proffering justice to all parties involved. Lawmakers in their separate contributions to the motion condemned the killing and urged the House to thoroughly investigate the matter and ensure justice is served.

The Speaker, Adebo Ogundoyin, in his remark condemned the killing and assured that the House will get to the root of the matter.

Ogundoyin, however, set up a five-man ad-hoc committee to be chaired by Honourable Akeem Obadara. He ordered the committee to ensure a thorough investigation and report back to the House on 31st August 2021.