

Screen/ 34

**I never thought  
I could stop  
womanising ...**

— Nollywood actor,  
**Ayo Badmus**



**'Our leader  
coordinates  
our operations  
from Kirikiri  
Maximum Prison**



Crime/ 15

**My father  
taught me how  
to be a leader**

— Monsurat Sunmonu,  
Oyo Speaker and only female  
member of the Assembly



Life & style 41

# Weekend PEOPLE

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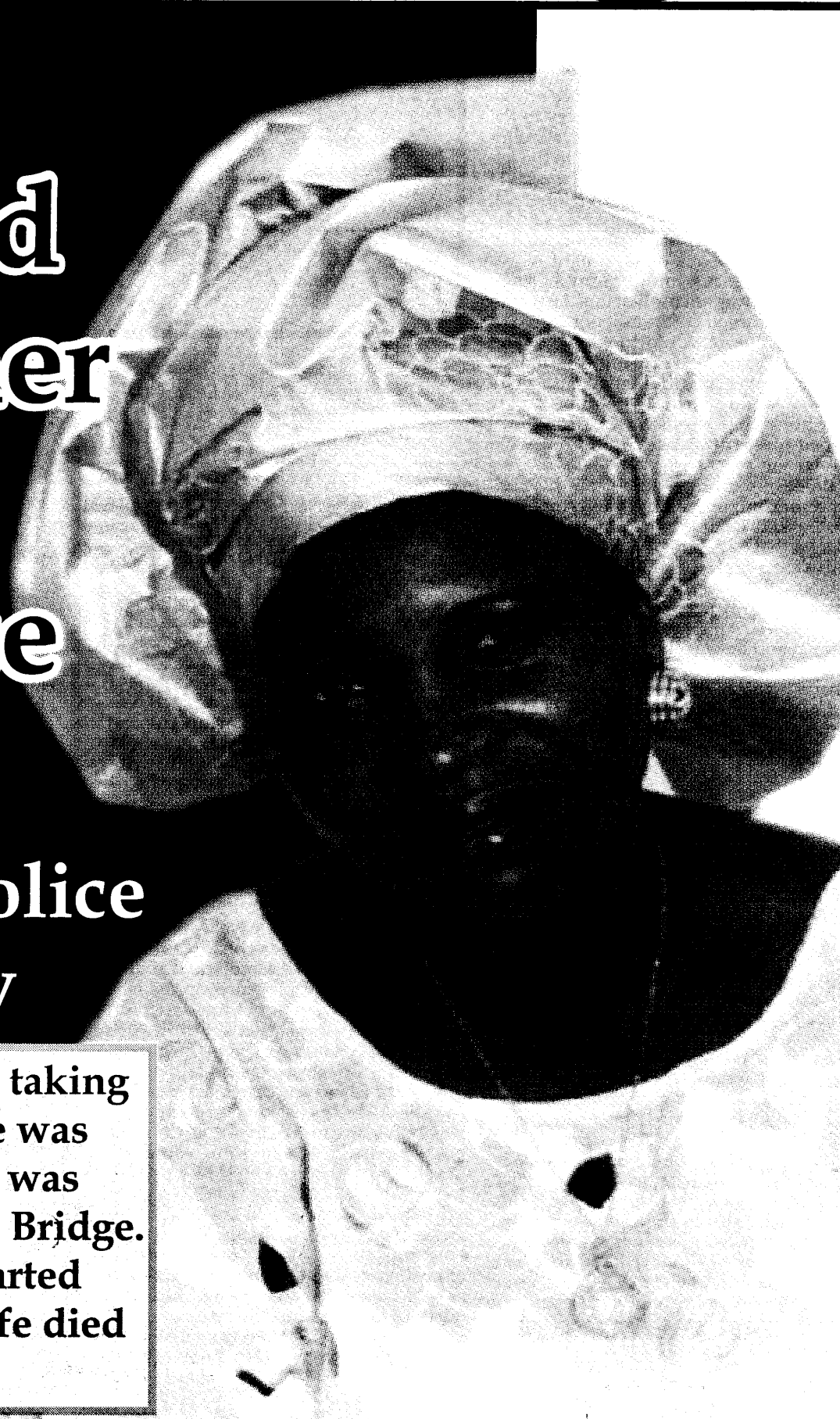
THE NATION, Saturday, DECEMBER 10, 2011

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## Mother of four, arrested in place of her husband, dies in Police custody

• Family kicks as Police  
deny responsibility

The policemen said they would be taking me to the hospital where my wife was receiving treatment... the vehicle was heading toward the Third Mainland Bridge. I protested and the policemen started telling me to take heart, that my wife died the night she was arrested...



**I**T would take a while for 56-year-old Olaoluwa Ojo to overcome the sudden death of his wife, Eunice Oluwakemi.

Eunice died in police custody after she was arrested for an alleged offence committed by her husband.

The widower fought back tears penultimate Thursday as he recalled the circumstances in which his wife allegedly died in the custody of policemen from the Adeniji Adele Police Station, leaving him with the task of bringing up their four children alone.

Recalling how his involvement in a business transaction led to the arrest of his late wife in his absence, Ojo, an auto dealer, said: "I am into the sale of Peugeot vehicles, but I was approached through a friend by a man named Olu to help him sell a Hilux van. He sent the vehicle to my office through one Sunday Adedokun. I took the vehicle and gave it to a partner of mine who deals in that brand of vehicles.

"After some weeks, the vehicle was bought for N1.6 million on October 21, 2011. But because I was still nursing the injuries I sustained from a motorbike accident two days before the vehicle was sold, I was not in the right frame of mind to take the money home from Yaba where the vehicle was bought at about 6 pm. So, I asked my partner, Jimoh Sanni, who sold the vehicle, to take the money home.

"Because of the Lagos council elections held on October 22, 2011, I asked my partner to bring the money to our office on October 24, 2011 for onward delivery to the owner of the vehicle. Before then, I had informed the owner of the vehicle on the telephone about the transaction and he said I should keep the money till October 24, which was a Monday, because he said he could not come over to pick the money that Friday, since the day was far spent.

"I had no reason to doubt my partner, because that was not the first time he would keep the proceeds of transactions involving the two of us. Unfortunately, when I called him that Monday to bring the money to the office because the owner of the vehicle was waiting for it, he told me on the telephone that there was a problem. I rushed to his residence to find out what was wrong.

"I met him a few metres from his residence in company with some sympathisers. I asked what was wrong and he explained that he decided to keep the money with a chief in the neighbourhood as soon as I left the day of the transaction because he was afraid of keeping the money at home, given that his wife had travelled out of town and he was the only one at home.

"He told me that one of the chief's wives allegedly stole the money from her husband and ran away. I asked why he did not tell me about it earlier, and he said he thought the woman would be found before the money would be called for."

The owner of the vehicle invited the police to arrest Ojo, Sanni and one Sunday Adedokun through whom he sent the vehicle to Sanni. Two policemen from Adeniji Adele Police Station arrived in no time and arrested Adedokun, who later led them to the homes of his friends. But when the officers, led by one Inspector Hamzat, got to Ojo's residence at No 24, Oremerin Street, Mile 12, Ketu, Lagos, he was not at home. The policemen then decided to arrest his wife in spite of her protests against the move.

Ojo said: "We later learnt from the husband of the woman who stole the money that she had been sighted in Ota, Ogun State. We set out immediately to locate her before she could spend the money.

"On getting there, we could not locate the woman, and it was late in the night. The three of us, including the woman's husband, decided to pass the night somewhere in town. We were there when I received a call from home at about 11.25 pm that some policemen from Adeniji Adele had stormed my home and were about to take my wife to their station because they could not see me.

"I tried to speak with the policemen on the telephone but they refused to answer the call when my wife gave them the phone. The policemen also went as far as

# Furore over death-in-custody of



• The deceased (4th left) with the family

■ Kunle AKINRINADE ■

searching my house, even though they had no warrant to do so. They also arrested my partner's wife and detained her along with my wife.

"Unfortunately, my wife died a few minutes after she was arrested and detained. The area where I live does not even fall under the jurisdiction of the police station where the policemen came from. I also discovered that they did not lodge any complaint at the nearby Ketu Police Station before they stormed my house to arrest my wife.

"I returned the following day and went straight to the station to demand for the release of my wife, but the policemen told me to exercise patience, saying my wife was indisposed and was receiving treatment at an undisclosed private hospital. All my pleas for access to my wife were turned down by the policemen.

"Surprisingly, at about 10 pm, the policemen said they would be taking me to the hospital where my wife was receiving treatment. But while we were on our way, I noticed that the vehicle was heading toward the Third Mainland Bridge. I protested and the policemen started telling me to take heart, that my wife died the night she was arrested.

"To show you how callous the policemen were, they drove me from their station on the island and dropped me under the Mile 12 Bridge, asking me to find my way home. Because of my health, I could not walk at all. So, I sat somewhere under the bridge until some Hausa traders took me home at about 11 pm.

"As I speak, the police are yet to offer any explanation on how my wife died or tender an apology for causing the death of my beloved wife. Is there any law that says a woman should be held for the crime of her husband? The cruel policemen killed my wife. I was duly informed that my wife explained to them that she was hypertensive, but they turned deaf ears to her pleas.

"Until her death, my wife was a school

A copy of the death certificate issued on the deceased after an the autopsy report signed by Dr.O.Lawal of the Department of Pathology and Forensic Medicine, Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH), said she died as a result of Intercerebral Haemorrhage and Hypertensive Heart Disease.

Cerebral haemorrhage is an intra-axial haemorrhage; that is, it occurs within the brain tissue rather than outside of it. This occurs when a diseased blood vessel within the brain bursts, allowing blood to leak inside the brain. The sudden

increase in pressure within the brain can cause damage to the brain cells surrounding the blood. If the amount of blood increases rapidly, the sudden buildup in pressure can lead to unconsciousness or death.

The other category of intracranial haemorrhage is extra-axial haemorrhage, such as epidural, subdural and subarachnoid haematomas, which all occur within the skull but outside of the brain tissue. There are two main kinds of intra-axial haemorrhage: intraparenchymal haemorrhage and intraventricular haemorrhage. As with other types of haemorrhage within the

teacher at Shepherd Hill Baptist School, Obanikoro, Lagos. She was a very supportive and dutiful wife.

"Now I am left to grapple with taking care of our four children. I don't know how I would be able to cope without her."

One of the children of the deceased, who was at home when the policemen came for her mother, Folasayo, recalled that her mother had already gone to bed while they were watching the television in the living room when the policemen arrived their residence the night she was arrested.

She said: "The policemen asked us to wake our mother up. She tried to explain to them that my father had gone out with his partner to search for the woman who allegedly stole the money, but they insisted they would detain her in their station until my father surfaced. She even tried to connect them with my father on the telephone but they refused to take the call.

"They led her out to their vehicle, which they parked at a distance from our house. We were not allowed to follow them to the car. The policemen are culpable in the death of my mother. Their action smacks of gross

violation of human rights and murder."

In his response, the spokesman of the Lagos State Police Command, Mr. Samuel Jinadu, a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), said: "The woman did not die in police custody. Her husband committed an offence and the policemen went to the house to arrest her husband with another suspect in that case. They did not meet him at home. So, the woman volunteered to take them to where her husband was. On the way, an argument ensued between her and another suspect (Sunday Adedokun). A few minutes later, the woman started collapsing little by little and slumped. She was rushed to a nearby hospital where she gave up the ghost. She was not brutalised or tortured by the policemen."

"At the moment, the policemen involved have been arrested and are now being detained at the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID), Panti Street, Yaba, while investigation continues."

Eyewitnesses' accounts, however, contradicted Jinadu's explanation. Sunday Adedokun, who led the policemen to Ojo's

## Cause of



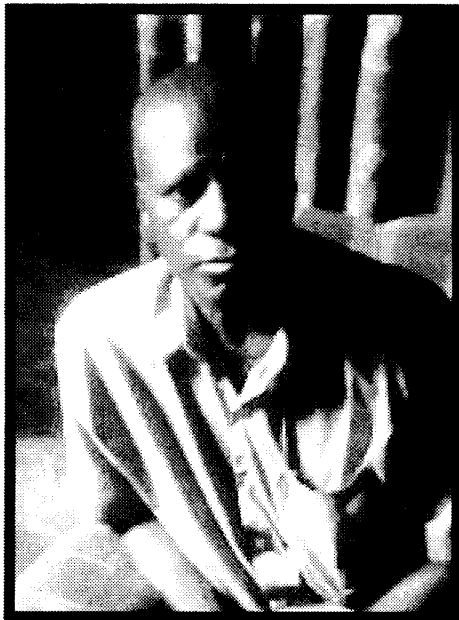
# mother of four arrested in place of husband



• Their residence



• Children of the deceased



• Husband of the deceased



• Ayo, first child of the deceased

## death

skull, intraparenchymal bleeds are a serious medical emergency because they can increase intracranial pressure, which if left untreated can lead to coma and death. The mortality rate for intraparenchymal bleeds is over 40%.

The Medical Director of Kuba Hospital, Ebute-Metta, Lagos State, Dr. Aaron Subete, said: "Intracerebral haemorrhage is the bleeding from the blood arteries at the base of the brain matter. It usually occurs in chronic hypertensive patients. The blood vessels in the brain matter would burst and the blood would fill the

brain rapidly because the vessels would no longer be able to cope with the high pressure from the blood. Then it could result in death or sometimes stroke, if the person involved receives adequate medical attention within 24 hours."

Severe headache followed by vomiting is one of the more common symptoms of intracerebral haemorrhage. Some patients may also go into a coma before the bleed is noticed. High blood pressure raises the risk of spontaneous intracerebral haemorrhage by two to six times and it is more common in adults than in children.

residence, said the police were being economical with the truth.

He said: "I was the one who took the vehicle to Ojo's office in Maryland as soon as the owner bought it via auction sale at a new generation bank's office. After some weeks, the vehicle was sold and I went to Ojo, who happens to be a friend, to verify the transaction. He told me the vehicle was sold for N1.6 million and that the money was kept somewhere. I asked him to keep the money in a safe in the office but he insisted it was being kept in safe hands.

"On the day the owner of the vehicle came to collect the money from Ojo, I was also around. It was then that we started hearing stories about how the money was stolen. Before I knew it, the owner of the vehicle had invited the police and I was arrested. Ojo and his other accomplice had by then bolted away to an unknown destination.

"After I had been detained at the Adeniji Adele Police Station for several hours, I was taken out by policemen at about 11 pm and they asked me to lead them to

Ojo's house. When we got there, Ojo was not at home. But we met his late wife who was already sleeping in her room.

"When the policemen searched the house and could not find Ojo, they asked the woman to follow them to the station. I warned them not to arrest the woman in place of her husband, but they refused. They shouted me down and said I was trying to teach them how to do their job. So, I kept quiet.

"When we got to where the car was parked, they asked the woman to sit in the middle with a policeman, but the woman requested that she should be allowed to sit near the door so she could have access to fresh air. She said she was allergic to heat and that she might start vomiting if she was exposed to heat.

"But the police officers turned her into a butt of jokes, which the woman protested against."

"They picked up another woman who happens to be the wife of Ojo's partner. That was at about midnight. When we got to the police station, the woman (the deceased) started vomiting. Before we knew

The woman did not die in Police custody. Her husband committed an offence and the policemen went to their house to arrest her husband with another suspect in that case. They did not meet him at home. So, the woman volunteered to take them to where her husband was... A few minutes later, the woman started collapsing little by little and slumped. She was rushed to a nearby hospital where she gave up the ghost...

—Police

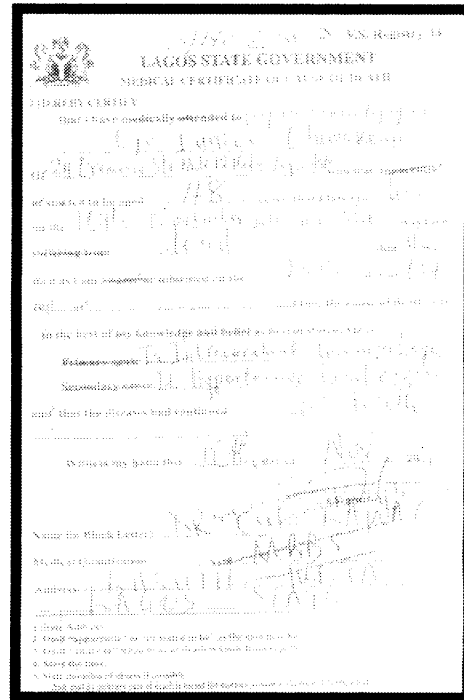
it, she had slumped. Her condition attracted everyone at the station, including myself and the other woman, but the policemen quickly took some water and poured it on her. Then they hurriedly took her away while we were detained. It was my wife who broke the news of her death to me when she brought me food at the station in the evening.

"If the Police said she did not make it to the station, they are only looking for an excuse to save their heads, because the woman was actually taken with myself and the wife of the other suspect to their station where she slumped. I remember the late woman had a history of hypertension. Her husband once told me a few years ago about her battles with the sickness."

Mrs.S.Sanni, who was arrested along with the deceased on the day of the incident, echoed Adedokun's comment.

She said: "I had never met the woman until that day. I had just returned from a trip to my Ilesha home town in Osun State the night before my arrest. So, my husband had no time to explain the transaction to me. I was surprised when the policemen came to our house at about midnight, asking for my husband. I told them my husband had gone out and that I did not know anything about his complicity in the said transaction.

"The policemen said they would arrest me in place of my husband and that once my husband knew that I was being detained at their station, he would come out of 'hiding'. I queried their justification for my arrest when it was my husband they were looking for, but they stood their



• The bromide of the medical certificate

ground, not minding the fact that I am a nursing mother.

"I quickly alerted our neighbours and a community leader in our area, who took note of the policemen's identity and the name of the station. That was how they led me to where their Golf car was parked.

"On our way to the station, an argument ensued between the late woman and Mr. Adedokun. It was later settled and the woman was complaining of heat. Not long after we got to the station, the deceased started vomiting and she later slumped. The officers at the station started pouring water on her to revive her. That was the last thing I knew about her.

"I even thought that she was being detained in another cell until the news of her death was broken by a senior officer on the night of the second day, while her husband and I were being driven home by the police officers."

Efforts made by our correspondent to speak with the owner of the vehicle, identified simply as Ola, were unsuccessful, as he declined comment. "Please, I don't have any comment to offer, because my lawyer is currently handling the matter," he said on the telephone.

A constitutional lawyer and human rights activist, Barrister Chino Obiagwu, said the action of the policemen was wrong and that they should be prosecuted for manslaughter.

He said: "In the first place, the policemen should not have arrested the late woman as replacement for her husband at that time of the day. There is nowhere in the law that says when a suspect is not at home, his/her spouse or relations should be arrested and detained. The policemen should be punished for manslaughter because they were the one that caused the stress that resulted in the woman's death."

The 48-year-old deceased has since been buried at Igede-Ekiti, Ekiti State, on November 18, 2011.