

Was this man murdered?

WHO killed Balogun Saheed Muhammed? This is the puzzle residents of Ojo, a Lagos suburb, have been trying to unravel since Sunday, when they found his body at the bank of the lagoon.

Yesterday, most of the shocked residents stood in groups, discussing Mohammed's death.

It was rumoured that the late Mohammed might have died while swimming. But members of his family suspect that he might have been strangled.

Sources told *The Nation* that last Saturday, the deceased went with some friends to a beach in Ibeshe, Ojo, where he allegedly injured his head while swimming. A source said he went with friends to Ibeshe to celebrate a friend's birthday.

Two scars which look like machete cuts on the lower part of his right chest and his left shoulder are fueling his family's fear that he might have been killed.

On Sunday afternoon, the deceased's relations had a heated argument at the palace of the Olojo of Ojo, Oba Galib Rufai. The late Muhammed's cousin, Mr Lateef Balogun, faulted the claim that he died while swimming, noting that

• Death shocks family, community

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By Adegunle Olugbamila

the mark on his forehead showed that it was hit with a heavy object.

He wondered why the deceased's friends with whom he attended the party abandoned his body at the shore. He urged the monarch to investigate an employee of deceased,

who was among of the those who first saw his remains. The suspect allegedly took the deceased's key from his pocket and dashed to his house to loot his valuables. She was reportedly caught by family members while trying to open the late Muhammed's door.

The monarch said two persons suspected to have accompanied the deceased to the party were being detained at the Ojo Divisional Police Station. He urged the family to leave everything to God.

A resident, simply identified as Samson, said he saw the deceased last Saturday night with his friends. He recalled: "I asked him: 'Egbon, where are you going at this time?' He said he was going out with his friends. I dissuaded him, but he said there was no problem. He then gave money to me and my friend to enjoy ourselves. I never knew that was the last time I would see him."

Samson said he saw the deceased's friends whom he could not recognise, while dropping him off at the shore early on Sunday, adding that his attempt to question them was rebuffed.



• The late Mustapha

The officer-in-charge at the Ojo Police Station could not be reached for comment. But an officer, who pleaded for anonymity, said: "Yes, the suspects are in our custody, but our DPO (divisional police officer) is not around; he is the only one who can allow you to interrogate the suspects, but if you can wait awhile, he might come anytime from now."

At the time of filing this report, arrangements were being made to bury the deceased according to Islamic rite.

