



Tragic death of policeman hours to promotion

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His family was eagerly waiting to usher in the New Year because of the good tiding it will bring for its breadwinner. His promotion to inspector was to take effect January 1. But three hours to the New Year, Sergeant sunday Clement, 41, was knocked down by a commercial motorcyclist and he died, BISI OLADELE reports.

All had been set for the New Year celebration. Members of Sergeant Sunday Clement's family were in high spirits for the double joy which January 1, had in stock for them. It was to be the witness of a New Year and the day the promotion of his bread winner to inspector would have taken effect. But it was not to be.

The late Clement, 41, was a Sergeant with the Highway Patrol in Akinyele Police Division, Ibadan the Oyo State capital. He was one of the drivers in the unit.

His team went on duty on Ijaye/Iseyin Road on the eve of the New Year to wrap up the year when a commercial motorcyclist allegedly knocked him down while he was crossing the road. Within one-anda-half hours of the accident, Sunday died, terminating the double joy awaiting him and his household last January 1.

His widow, Bola, in an emotional recall of how her heartthrob died on New Year's eve, said she was at the middle of a church service to usher in the New Year when her phone rang repeatedly. The repeated calls forced her to excuse herself from the church to return the call to her husband's telephone line that had been calling.



But she was greeted by a strange voice that declared: "This is not your husband. I am his boss. Your husband had an accident a while ago and we have rushed him to a private hospital in Akinyele. Please come over here."

She continued: "After receiving the call, I didn't know what to do. I invited one of my friends in the church to accompany me to the hospital. On getting to the hospital, the doctor told me that he had internal bleeding; having fallen on his occiput. The injury on the occiput was deep but the doctor plastered it after applying treatment. He advised us to take him to the University College Hospital (UCH).

"When we got to UCH, they admitted him immediately. The doctors told me that he needed oxygen. Hence, they asked me to go and look for a large amount of money. Then, I came home reluctantly, thinking of the sad incident and where to get such huge amount of money.

"I arrived at home at 1:00 a.m. When I called again, they told me he was responding to treatment."

But at noon of January 1, Mrs Sunday said her pastor, accompanied by some others, visited her to break the sad news that her husband was dead. They revealed that he actually died before the break of the New Year.

According to her, his colleagues explained to her that her husband initially declined to join them for the duty that evening but later changed his mind to perform the last duty in 2015.

On arriving at the spot where the team operated, they recalled that Mr Sunday led the prayer for the entire team and their operation that night.

"A few minutes later, he crossed the road to the other side to urinate when an oncoming commercial motorcyclist (popularly called *okada*), knocked him down. It was between 8:00 and 8:00 p.m." she said.

She revealed that the motorcyclist was a 17-year-old who could not offer anything. He has since been detained

On what the Oyo State Police Command was doing on the matter, Mrs Sunday said the command had been taking all necessary steps to give him a befitting burial and process his benefits for dying in the course of discharging his duties.

Mrs Sunday described her husband of 13 years as a father to her, their children and his siblings.

"I can't forget him. He took our welfare (our children and I) very seriously. He was a father, mothereverything to me. I will miss his immense understanding, patience and care. He showed understanding very well," she said.

Also recalling his brother's death, Sunday's younger brother, Mr Godwin Namba-Clement, said it still seems like a dream.

According to him, a friend called him on telephone from Ibadan on January 1 to inform him of his elder brother's death which he dismissed because it sounded impossible for death to come so suddenly that way. Godwin lives with their parents in their home town, Kachia, Kaduna State.

He said: "On New Year day, after returning from church, a friend called me from Ibadan and told me Sunday was dead. I thought it was a joke. Then, I called my brother's wife and she confirmed it. I had to travel to Ibadan immediately. His colleagues took me to the scene of the incident. It is still unbelievable."

Sunday completed his promotion course in September, last year after which he was elevated to the higher rank of Police Inspector. The promotion took effect on January 1, 2016.

Sunday is survived by wife and three children.

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