

Puzzle over oil worker's death in Delta hotel

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•The late Ashaka

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On a beautiful evening of Tuesday, September 2, friends and well-wishers joined Tony Voke Ashaka and his wife at the serene garden bar of Eliko Hotel in Ekpan, Uvwie Local Government Area of Delta State, to celebrate his birthday.

Three days later, the handsome young man went back to the hotel but died in mysterious circumstances hours later. The cause of his death remains yet a mystery.

An autopsy reportedly done failed to unravel what was responsible for the passing on of the bustling young man in the prime of his life. A source privy to the report said it pointed to excessive perspiration, another source said he possibly choked to death.

Rumor that he had a female consort with him seemed unfounded. The puzzle gets more complicated by the absence of a CCTV footage, which could have provided some answers as to what transpired.

The hotel is a massive facility with three different buildings sited on a wide expanse of land. It was gathered that the managers of the hotel told the police that it has no functional CCTV.

It was said that a staff of the hotel found Ashaka's remains in the room, but it was not clear if the door was open at the time. It was gathered that the room owner was arrested and detained at Ekpan Police Station, after police were called in to remove the body.

"He was found naked, except for a pair of boxers. His clothes were in the room. There were bottles of gin and Guinness stout. There were vomits on the floor, which indicated that he probably puked before dying," our source said.

Friends and associates of the deceased told our reporter that he stopped drinking years ago due to an underlying ailment. This led to questions about the origin of alcoholic drinks in the room.



•The late Ashaka

Hide-and-seek game with hotel workers

Our reporter's effort to make clarifications from the hotel a day after the incident saw the staff engaging in hide-and-seek.

A supervisor (name withheld) flatly denied the report, saying: "How did you know? Who told you? I have not verified the authenticity of this thing. I don't really know, but I will get more information about what you are saying."

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When our reporter pressed to speak with someone in a higher cadre, he insisted that only the manager could speak for the establishment, but he refused to avail the reporter the manager's telephone number.

Three days later, our reporter went back, but the supervisor was even more vehement in his denial: "Nothing of such happened. That was why I was asking where you people got the information. Nothing happened. Nobody died here."

Police: Lifeless body found in Eliko hotel room

However, the Delta State Police Command, through the Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Onome Onovwakpoyeya, confirmed the incident to our reporter.

He said: "Yes, the incident at Eliko Hotel is true. They said they saw a lifeless body. The manager saw his lifeless body in a room. I think he was a guest."

Our independent investigation revealed that shortly after he entered the facility, the deceased, who was said to be well-known to the management and staff, had invited a friend to join him at the hotel lobby, but the friend could not see him, even though his car was at the car park.

"The friend waited for about 30 minutes. He was seen making telephone calls, maybe to the dead man's number. But after about 30 minutes, the man drove off," our source added.

It was gathered that the deceased man's wife also tried to reach him and even went to the hotel, where she saw his car but no sign of him. She reportedly called him, but it could not be confirmed if they spoke.

Hours later, friends of the family stormed the hotel to find out what had happened to him, only to be told that he had died in the hotel room.