

# Civil society groups, widow seek justice for slain youth leader



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• *By Halimah Balogun*

A coalition of civil society groups has demanded justice for Sheriff Salami, a youth leader in Ojomu Community, [Lagos State](#), who was murdered on April 18 in Ogombo.

They called on the Lagos State government and the Inspector-General of Police (IG), [Kayode Egbetokun](#), to compel the [Lagos State Police Command](#) to bring the perpetrators to book.

The groups yesterday staged a protest at the Lagos State High Court in Ikeja.

President of the Centre for Human and Socio-economic Rights (CHSR), Comrade Alex Omotehinse, said the campaign was to draw attention to 'the failure' of the police in Ogombo, Eti-Osa, Lekki, and Area 'J' Police Command to investigate Salami's murder.

He emphasised the 'indifference and lack of commitment' shown by the police in addressing the incident, despite it being duly reported at the Ogombo Police Station.

He said: “As civil society groups, we are deeply touched by the pain of the bereaved family. The police appear uninterested in investigating the murder which was perpetrated in broad day light. The immediate family is worried and frustrated by the delay that is increasingly assuming a deliberate ploy to shield the perpetrators from justice.

“The deceased, who is the breadwinner, left behind his critically ill aged mother (who unfortunately died in her inconsolable state in the last week of October), his wife Mariam and three daughters, Sinata (five years), Ayisha (four years), and Arafat (two years). It is over eight months that Salami was murdered. It is indeed sad that the family have been left to mourn him without any hope of justice. We are also requesting the National Human Rights Commission to demand urgent investigation into the gruesome murder without further delay.”

The groups, accompanied by the widow, has submitted petitions to Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu, Commissioner of Police, Lagos State Police Command, and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) through the Lagos office of the agency.

Mrs. Salami, in her emotional testimony, recounted the devastating events and expressed her concerns for her safety and her three daughters, as they continue to live in the same community.

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She also shed light on her husband’s fear of retribution due to false accusations of embezzlement, which he vehemently denied.

“I returned from work on April 18, and learnt that my husband was dead and had buried. Since then, nothing has been done to it. Some of my brothers’ in-law made a complaint that same day to the police station because he was shot. I learnt after he was shot dead, some people in the community took his remains home and buried immediately, they didn’t take him to any hospital, they just buried him just like that.

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“I asked why they buried him without anybody’s consent; they said the blood was still flowing. Before they even brought him home, they had dug the grave to show how wicked they are. I don’t know who these people are. The only thing I know is they accused him of collecting N20 million from one chief in Ajiran. That’s the only thing my late husband told me and ever since then, he’s always scared even to go out. I kept asking him if he collected money to kill somebody, he said he did not. There was nothing in his bank account when I checked after his death and it is not possible to collect N20 million in cash.

“I was invited at the station to write a statement. Since then, they have done nothing about it. They keep saying it’s cultists that are fighting, that we should forget about the case. Why would they kill somebody and bury him and tell the people investigating to forget the case?

“I want justice and I want the government to protect me and my children; I still live in that community because I have nowhere else to go. I know after today, they will come after me and I’m not scared.

“Nigerians should just be aware that if anything should happen to me today, it’s the same people that killed my husband that killed me.”

Acting Commissioner for Police Ayilara Waheed, while receiving the petition, assured the public that the case will be investigated. He urged those with factual information to come forward and provide evidence to support the investigation.