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Businessman murdered for refusing to settle Area Boys

at Wednesday, October 16, 2013



A businessman, **Charles Ugwu**, has been killed in the Ajegunle area of Lagos, over his refusal to settle some street urchins, popularly known as *area boys*.

The incident was said to have occurred at Uzor Street, Ajegunle, on September 24 2013. A tyre dealer, Ugwu was said to have been accosted by two area boys, identified as Saturday and Chimezie, while offloading goods from a vehicle to his shop.

The deceased's wife, Stella, who claimed to have witnessed the incident, told newsmen that her husband had resisted the thugs' efforts to extort money from him resulting in the assault on her husband.

She said, "Around 9pm on that day, two young men, known as Saturday and Chimezie, accosted us saying they would not allow us to continue working until we settle them.

"We asked them why we should pay them because the goods had nothing to do with the hoodlums. Saturday was "annoyed; he walked away only to return with stones, which he threw at us. When my husband cautioned him to stop causing trouble, Saturday picked up a "stick and struck Ugwu on the neck."

Ugwu was said to have fallen to the ground while all efforts to revive him failed.

It was learnt that immediately after Ugwu was killed, the Divisional Police Officer of Ajegunle Police Station, Mr. Abayomi Agbana, was contacted. Agbana was said to have dispatched policemen to the area and the two suspects were arrested.

The bereaved wife lamented the hardship that had been brought on the family due to her husband's death.

She said, "Who will train my children for me? Ugwu was a good father and husband; he was much too young to die. We loved each other so much. How can my three children be fatherless at these ages? Our first is just 15 years old. The second is 12 years and the last child is nine. These hoodlums have wiped out the joy of my life."

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In his statement at the police station, Saturday claimed that he actually demanded money from the businessman but had nothing to do with his death.

He said while demanding money from Ugwu, Stella told her husband not to part with any money.

Saturday claimed that at that instant, Stella held his singlet. He alleged that Chimezie and the deceased were trying to appeal to Stella to let go of the suspect when the businessman suddenly collapsed.

He insisted that neither him nor his accomplice had fought Ugwu.

Chimezie was also said to have alleged, in his statement, that he was trying to appeal to Stella when her husband suddenly collapsed. He claimed that no form of violence had been used on the deceased.

It was gathered that the matter had been transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department, Yaba, Lagos, for further investigation.

The victim's younger brother, Francis, said the family was ready to bury the corpse but police had yet to release the body.

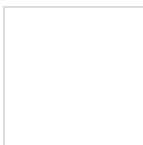
He said, "The police have insisted that the autopsy report must be done before the body would be released."

Detectives at the SCID have however blamed the ongoing doctors' strike for the delay.

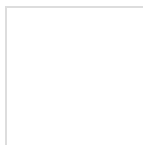
A detective, who spoke to our correspondent on the condition of anonymity on Tuesday, said, "Many bereaved families have been complaining since the doctors strike started. This is because they want to bury their loved ones but cannot take away their corpses because autopsy reports have not been done. The situation is worrisome and embarrassing in some cases."

The Police Public Relations Officer of the state command, Ngozi Braide, said she would call back when contacted for information on the case. She had yet to do so as of 8pm.

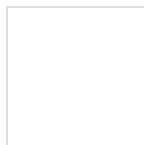
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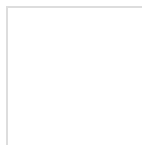
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