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We Want Justice

•Family of robbery victim cries out •Hospital denies allegation

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FEATURES



A young lady, Moradeun Balogun, has been reported dead following the alleged refusal by a Lagos hospital to offer medical treatment except a police report was produced after she was stabbed during a robbery incident on Monday evening while she was returning from work.

Moradeun was said to have been stabbed in the neck by her attackers and taken to R. Jolad Hospital, Gbagada, where she died on Tuesday morning.

A relative, Molade Balogun, expressed dismay at the sudden death of the podcast host on Twitter who she described as a woman with untapped resources that had passion to champion great causes.

"My sister was a great woman. She was going to change Nigeria for the better. She had a plan and I was going to watch her become great. It just took a stab in the neck to end all that. Because of what? I failed my sister," she grieved

Demanding justice for her late sister, Molade called on Nigerians to lend helping hands so justice could be redeemed. "I want justice for my sister, Moradeun Balogun. Nigerians don't fail me. Justice to Moradeun is justice for all the ones we have lost. If you have lost someone, please help Moradeun," she pleaded.

Like many other Nigerians, Moradeun lost her life despite legal provisions that mandated hospital in the country to prioritise saving lives over any other salient issues.

According to section 20 of the National Health Act, 2014, "Healthcare providers, health workers or establishments shall not refuse a person on emergency treatment for any reason. Violation of the law attracts a fine of N100, 000 or a jail term of six months or both."

Similarly in 2017, the Federal Government enacted the Compulsory Treatment and Care for Victims of Gunshot Act which provides for the compulsory treatment and care for victims of gunshots by hospital in Nigeria and goes further to impose sanction on erring hospital. In Section 11, a five-year jail term or N500, 000 fine or both for any authority or person whose omission results in the unnecessary death of a gunshot victim.

Section one of the same law mandates hospitals to receive and treat victims of gunshot wounds with or without police clearance and with or without initial deposit but are duty bound to report to the nearest police station within two hours of commencement of treatment.

However, the hospital refuted the allegation, noting that it is committed to saving lives and insisted that the hospital would not engage in acts that will jeopardize the core values placed on premium care and value on human lives.

The hospital in a statement explained that the woman was assessed and immediately referred to General Hospital Gbagada for vascular surgery.

"At R-Jolad Hospital, our primary purpose has always been to save lives each time we encounter both difficult and less difficult situations. We do this for all sorts of cases and all sort of people including gunshot victims without requesting for any police report as a requirement to be met before attending to the case.

"The most recent example (reflecting our intervention protocol) at hand was about a patient that was rushed to our facility on emergency yesterday December 2. In the first place, the patient was not a victim of gunshot. It was a stab wound. The patient was brought in by four good Samaritans around 07:19 p.m. and was attended to by two doctors whose assessment indicated that the patient needed immediate attention of a vascular surgeon.

"The patient was, therefore, referred to the closest hospital, Gbagada General Hospital in one of the available vehicles on the spot since the ambulance was yet to return from a medical assignment. The vehicle departed at exactly 07:26 p.m. Further findings and follow-up revealed that the patient was received in Gbagada General Hospital.

"We remain true and committed to our core values which place premium and value on human lives."

Public outcry

Meanwhile, Nigerians have taken to social media to condemn the alleged incident further trending the #justiceformoradeun #treatfirstquestionlater to demand justice.

Twitter user @mcmuchacha, "wondered why the hospital would lay emphasis on a paper when an emergency was before it. "Someone is taking her last breath inside your stupid hospital and you're there requesting for police report? Are you having a special kind of stupidity or what?

"Government has failed us in every aspect. They've made patriotism a regretful thing. I still don't get it?" Those who knew Balogun reminisced about her wonderful nature, describing her as a kind and pure soul.

Condemning the alleged action of the hospital, J.J. Omojuwa said, "A young lady was stabbed by robbers. She was rushed to some useless hospital that refused to treat her until they see a police report. They refused her first aid, refused to stitch her up to seam the bleeding. She died. How is this hospital not an accomplice to her death?" He asked rhetorically.

Desola said, "She was robbed. She was stabbed on the neck. She was rushed to the hospital. She was not treated because a police report could not be provided. She died in the process. She gets justice."

Popular Social media critic, Segun Awosanya, urged the family of the deceased to reach out in order to aid the investigations. He said, "Late Moradeun will get justice.

The family should contact us at @SIAF_NG or reach out to DSP @ElkanaBala of the @policeNG_Lagos today to aid the ongoing investigation into this matter. This madness must stop. #TreatFirstQuestionLater"

One Oluwasnmi Oyeola @St_Sanmi expressed sadness over the avoidable death of Ms Moradeun. She said, "my heart broke when I saw this – another victim of a failed healthcare system, and a failed nation at large. While some of us might run to Canada, not everyone will. She is you and me; she is your distant nephew or niece, cousin, uncle, aunt, who will remain?

Eniola Havoc said, "The whole of yesterday I had been awake for hours just working relentlessly from the previous day, hoping I'd get some rest at some point. Then I got the call late in the night. I have been broken and unable to find sleep, I pray she finds rest."

Nanya said: "That was how my mother died. Because of a stupid freaking paper! What is the purpose of police reports? That day, I cursed the hospital, the police force, and this country. You demand police reports when our police system is not in order?"

@intergrity56 wrote, "I am heart broken by the news of Moradeun's death. I am angry that Nigeria hasn't gotten basic things right. I am pissed that our system is set up to take lives and not to save them. I am gutted that hospitals cannot treat a knife wound without @PoliceNG report. Guess What? It will happen again" A pessimistic Mr Integrity said.

Another person identified as Bolanle recalled her moments with the deceased. "I worked with Moradeun on a team one time in the university and she was so amiable. We got talking about fashion and elephants, then food. She was wonderful!" She completed her sister, Molade Balogun's narration: "Everyone who contributed to cause this pain should be punished. The robber/murderer, the failed organisations," she demanded.