Lion kills OAU zoo keeper

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TRAGEDY struck at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife on Monday when a nine-year-old lion killed Mr Olabode Olawuyi, a veterinary technologist, who had been in charge of the institution's zoological garden for over a decade.

The deceased, according to a statement by the university's Public Relations Officer, Mr Biodun Olanrewaju, was attacked while feeding the animal and others in their den.

Olanrewaju said the incident has thrown the management, staff, students and the entire university community into mourning.

The statement by the university revealed that Mr Olawuyi was attacked on Monday afternoon, adding that other members of staff who were at the scene did everything within their power to rescue their boss, but the lion had already caused severe injuries on the victim.

The statement said: "On hearing the sad news, the management team, led by the vice chancellor, abruptly ended an ongoing meeting for an on-the-spot assessment.

"The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Adebayo Simeon Bamire, was informed on arrival by the acting Director of the University Health and Medical Centre, Dr Tirimisiyu Olatunji, that all first aid and medical efforts to save the life of the victim proved abortive."

"Saddened by this tragic event, the aggressive lion has been euthanized.

"Mr Olawuyi had been taking care of the lions since they were born about nine years ago, but tragically, the lion killed the man who had been feeding them.

"The university's management has sent a delegation to the widow and children of the deceased, imploring them to take solace in God who gives life and also has the power to take life.

"Meanwhile, the vice chancellor has ordered comprehensive investigation into the immediate and remote causes of the incident," the statement added.