

DEATH IN THE

Man in police net over the death of female neighbour three days after they quarrelled

Sesan Olufowobi

Only a favourable medical report could save Ondo-State-born Joseph Afolayan from murder charges, following his arrest by the police in Lagos State over the death of his neighbour, Mrs. Sade Shomuyiwa.

The police are laying the blame for Shomuyiwa's death on the physical combat Afolayan had with her three days before she died.

Saturday Punch gathered that the late Shomuyiwa had a history of hypertension and diabetes. Some residents of Adeniji Street, Ayobo-Ipaja in Lagos, who spoke with our correspondent, said there was a hunch in the neighbourhood who did not know that she was suffering from the ailment.

But the report of the doctor who examined her body after her death was that she died of a heart attack. Afolayan, 40, was arrested on April 4, 2007, after a woman must have inadvertently beat her mother with



what triggered the murder. There are two versions of what triggered the murder. One version says that Afolayan was angry with Shomuyiwa because she was a widow and had no children. The other version says that Afolayan was angry with Shomuyiwa because she was a widow and had no children. The police are investigating the case and have not yet released any more details.

NEIGHBOURHOOD

March 19 quarrel. While Afolayan said the quarrel began when one of the boys that were living with him went to pluck mangoes from Shomuyiwa's compound, Funmilayo said it was Afolayan's wife who started the trouble by attacking her (Funmi's) younger sister, Ronke, who had gone to fetch water.

Afolayan, who spoke with our correspondent last Tuesday, at Panti, said the Shomuyiwas attacked an eight year-old-boy named Ojo, who was living with him, when he went to pluck mangoes from their compound.

"That was on Saturday 17. I had travelled to Ado-Ekiti with my wife. When we came back, we learnt about what happened; and on seeing the boy, I was disappointed that anybody could beat a small boy like that for plucking mango. I decided that I would speak with Funmi and Ronke's parents because I knew that they were responsible for it."

But Afolayan said he was unable to report the girls to their parents that day, and it was not until the following Monday that another incident forced him to go to the Shomuyiwa compound. "Around 4 pm that day, I just heard some noise from their compound. Their house is opposite mine; so from the noise, I knew it was Ojo that somebody was beating again."

But Funmilayo, who denied beating Ojo, said it was Afolayan's wife who attacked her younger sister. "My father sent her to fetch water and, as he returned, Mrs. Afolayan attacked her and threw the water away. Later, children from Afolayan's compound started throwing stones at us in our house. So we picked Ojo, who was the ring leader."

Eventually, by the time Afolayan went into the compound of the Shomuyiwas, tempers were already high. Before long, a free-for-all ensued.

According to Funmilayo, when Afolayan came into their compound, he shouted and blamed the family for the crisis. But when Sade Shomuyiwa confronted him, he slapped her. When she returned the slap, Afolayan allegedly picked a plank that had been lying on the ground and started hitting her with it.

Funmilayo alleged, "He hit her randomly. He was really angry. My mother was on the ground, but he kept hitting her. When I saw that

he could kill her the way he was going, I picked a broken bottle and stabbed him on his shoulder. Then he got angrier and started chasing me. But I managed to escape."

However, Afolayan said Funmilayo's tale was a figment of her imagination. "She has always been a troublesome young lady. Yes I was shouting at the woman, but Funmilayo suddenly stabbed me with the broken bottle. It was the anger from that that made me pick a plank on the ground. The plank was meant for Funmilayo and the mother knew this, so she

held me. The only thing I did was that I pushed her and she fell. Then I ran after Funmilayo. That is all. I did not lay my hands on her."

Afolayan said he later went to report to the police at the Ipaja, Lagos division that he had been stabbed, which led to the arrest of Shomuyiwa and her children. He said, "The following day, the policemen called me and said Mrs. Shomuyiwa could not breathe very well, that they wanted to release her. I said okay. You can then imagine my shock on Friday morning, when policemen

surrounded my house and arrested me on the allegation that Mrs. Shomuyiwa was dead, and it was the quarrel we had three days earlier that killed her."

Lagos State police spokesman, Olubode Ojajuni (SP), said the arrest of Afolayan, his wife and his driver was based on Funmilayo's statement. He said the police would explore all avenues, including medical tests, to establish the cause of the woman's death.

"We will do our job and leave no stone unturned. At the end of the investigation, justice will prevail," he said.



**Now it is time
your money will
yield good returns**

We encourage people to return and call spot-on to find you more

What's more, all our investments

For more information, call 0800 542 7515, 01 72 745 36 or visit www.piml.com (Pension Investment Management Limited) E-mail: info@piml.com

PIML Pension Investment Management Limited

Palcomms