

# PUNCH METRO

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## Our sons died after brutal beating by policemen – Parents

Simon Utebor, Warri

LIKE an average Nigerian avid football fan, two brothers, Collins and Owen Onaodowan, had looked forward to Sunday, August 15, 2010, the day Manchester United and Newcastle were to play in the English premier league, with enthusiasm.

Being Man U fans, the two brothers chose to watch the match at their aunt's residence. But they were disappointed when they found out that their aunt's decoder was not on full subscription. By implication, they could not watch the match at their aunt's place and they opted for one of the viewing centres within the neighbourhood.

Their elder brother, Kevin, a Chelsea fan, who went with them decided to return to the family residence at 12B NEPA Line, opposite Okoloba Road, Effurun, Ovwie Local Government Area of Delta State.

Although Man U won the match, Collins and Owen could not savour the resounding victory of their club.

According to Kevin, a Delta State University graduate, who claimed that he left his brothers at 8pm, a member of their church called around 10pm that his brothers had been apprehended for robbery.

Kevin told PUNCH METRO, "Around 10pm, a church member phoned me that my younger brothers were later apprehended by

soldiers and riot policemen at Okoloba Power Holding Company of Nigeria sub-station for robbery.

"I quickly alerted my

parents and we left for Okoloba to see what was amiss. When we got there, we met a mammoth crowd watching as the soldiers and

riot policemen stripped my brothers naked and beat them to a pulp.

"At that time, they were still alive. I asked Collins whether he did not show them his National Youth Service Corps ID card to identify himself as a corps member and not a robber, he said he did but they did not mind him.

"Suddenly, one policeman, identified as Dogo, started calling me and my parents names, 'you family of robbers, bastards, get out of this place before I shoot you,' pointing his gun to us."

Kevin said despite pleas made to the security agents that Collins and Owen were not robbers, the policemen and soldiers continuously beat the brothers to the amazement of the crowd that gathered at the scene.

He added, "Before our eyes, they bundled them (Collins and Owen) into their Hilux van and drove them to Ekpan Police Station. We were relieved that they were taking them to the police station with the hope that the following day, we would go and bail them.

"How wrong we were! The following day, we went to the station, but we were told at the station that there was no case involving my brothers. As I was about leaving, my uncle, a chief, came to join me at the station. He went in to see the DPO and the DPO told him that he was aware of the two boys that were brought last night and that they were robbers.

"My uncle told him that it was not true because the boys were responsible children who had not been involved in any criminality since they were born. He deceived my uncle and told him that they might have been taken to a hospital since they were brought in with bruises.

"This made us to start searching hospitals and police stations to know their whereabouts until one of the stations asked us to go back to Ekpan station again. When we got back there, the DPO now called my uncle in and told him that my brothers had been killed. When he sought their corpses, he said they had been buried."

Kevin said the family had secured the service of a

lawyer to ensure that the killers of his brothers were brought to book.

Kevin's father, Austin, who described Collins and Owen as obedient children, said since they were born, they had not been engaged in any criminality.

He said, "I want justice. I appeal to the Inspector General of Police, Delta State Governor and Commissioner of Police, Delta State Command to bring the killers to book. Again, I want them to investigate the lives of my children whether they had been involved in any robbery or criminality in the past."

Recalling how his children were tortured in his presence, Austin said while begging the security agents to leave his children, one of them used the butt of his gun to hit him in his mouth and a tooth fell off.

The slain brothers' mother, Otomirre, who was sobbing continuously, told our correspondent that her children's death had dealt a devastating blow to the entire family.

She said, "The policemen were so cruel. I begged them to leave my children that they were not robbers, they did not even listen. Even the crowd pleaded with them, they did not listen. What kind of jungle justice is this?"

"Are they not supposed to take them to court to ascertain their criminality? This is one death too many. I appeal to the Federal Government and the relevant authorities to fish out the killers of my children. They meant a lot to me. We need justice. We need justice. That is what we need."

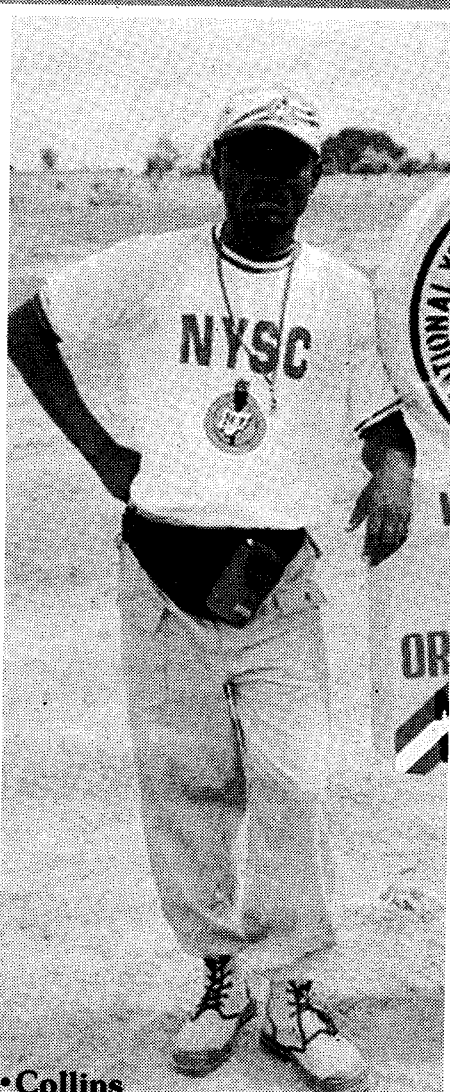
But the Police Public Relations Officer, Delta State Command, Mr. Charles Morka, told our correspondent on the telephone that the police should not be dragged into the death of the two brothers.

He said the brothers were armed robbery suspects and they were mobbed by the crowd.

"The two were armed robbery suspects and were attacked and killed by the mob. Police have no hand in their death," Morka said.



• Owen



• Collins

## Court jails fake breast cancer patients

Francis Falola, Minna

A Magistrate's Court sitting in Minna, Niger State capital, on Wednesday jailed two fake breast cancer patients, Ngozi John, and Chioma Ibe, for extorting money from members of the public.

The two women were arraigned before the Magistrate

Court Three presided over by Alhaji Nasiru Muazu.

Police Prosecutor, Abdullahi Alhaji, told the court that the women were charged for conspiracy, cruelty to children and unlawful compulsory labour and extortion.

The prosecutor said the offences committed by the suspects were punishable under Section 230, 280 and 290 of the penal code law.

Although John and Ibe pleaded guilty when their pleas were taken, they urged the magistrate to be lenient with them.

In his judgment, Muazu said the court lacked jurisdiction to try the suspects for conspiracy.

He, however, sentenced them to 18 months imprisonment each for the three-count charge of compulsory labour, cruelty to children and extortion of money or payment of N7,000 as fine.

The court also ordered that the begging proceeds of N49,050 found in possession of John and Ibe at the time of arrest be forfeited to the government.



• Ibe

• John

Photos: File copies