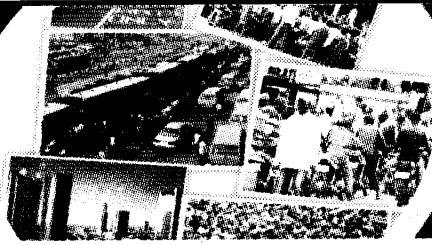


## PUNCH



## METRO

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# Man held for causing electrocution of spare parts dealer

Adeola Akinyode

A 31-year-old man, Oyeade Gbamila, is currently being detained at the State Criminal Investigation Department, Musiliu Smith Street, Yaba, Lagos, for allegedly causing the death of a man by electrocution.

Gbamila, an indigene of Ondo State, was accused of causing the death of a 30-year-old spare part dealer, Anthony Uwakwue, on November 2, after a heated argument had started between the two men at Cele Bus Stop on Oshodi/Mile 2 Expressway.

PUNCH METRO gathered that on the fateful day, Gbamila, an auto mechanic, was leaving for his place of work in the Apapa area of the state, while Uwakwue was heading for his shop in Lawanson area of Surulere.

Gbamila, who narrated his ordeal, said he had just boarded a bus, when Uwakwue raised the alarm and accused him of robbing him of his money and mobile phone.

He said, "As I sat down in the bus, the man (Uwakwue) started shouting 'thief, thief' and was pointing at me. He said I picked his pocket before I boarded the bus. I was shocked when he said that, and I told him that I could not have stolen the items, because I boarded the bus before him. So, it could have been someone else."



Lagos State CP, Yakubu Alkali

"Immediately, the bus driver and the other passengers told me to alight and they started beating me without even searching me. They were all calling me a thief and said I should bring out the stolen items. I

told them that I didn't have the items with me and even told them to search me."

The suspect said while all these were going on, Uwakwue was shouting and prancing about, looking for an object to hit him with.

"When the people were all rough-handling me, the deceased was shouting at me to confess and was looking for something to hit me. He said that by the time he hits my head with an object, I will confess," Gbamila said.

The auto mechanic said while Uwakwue was looking for the object to hit him with, he touched an electric sign post at a filling station and got electrocuted.

"I didn't even know what had happened to the man, until I heard people shouting and out of confusion, they left me and went to the man, who was already stuck to the sign post," he narrated.

Gbamila added that people stood away from the deceased for fear of also being electrocuted.

"Some people ran into the filling station to tell the officials what had happened and they told them to switch off their power supply. After the power was switched off, then the man fell down," he said.

Eyewitnesses said the fear of being electrocuted prevented sympathisers from giving Uwakwue first aid.

A source, who did not want her name published, said, "There was an argument between them, and people were accusing one of them of stealing the other one's money and phone. But I didn't pay any particular attention, until I saw people running and shouting 'fire, fire,' that a man had been electrocuted. I had to move away from there because everywhere was wet because it rained on that day."

An employee of the filling station, who craved anonymity, also confirmed the incident. He said it was not until people came to tell them to switch off their power supply that they became aware of what had happened.

"We were here, inside the petrol station and some people rushed here to tell us to disconnect our electricity. We told them there was no electricity and we were using generator. But they insisted because someone had been electrocuted. It was then we quickly switched off the generator. We didn't even know what happened," said the employee.

A police source, who wanted to remain anonymous because he was not the spokesman of the police command, said Uwakwue was already dead when they got to the scene.

He said Gbamila was promptly arrested and taken to Okota Police Station, Isolo, while the corpse was deposited at a mortuary.

"When we got to the scene, we arrested the suspect and brought him to our station here. We didn't find anything incriminating on him when he was searched, but we found two mobile phones, a cash sum of N15,000 and other personal items on the deceased," he said.

He said the case had been transferred to the Homicide Section of the SCID. He said an autopsy would be carried out on the deceased to ascertain the exact cause of his death.

When contacted on the phone, the Police Public Relations Officer, Lagos State Command, Mr. Samuel Jinadu, said the matter was being investigated.

## Air Force officer loses four children to inferno

Mudiaga Affe, Calabar

Four children belonging to an unidentified Air Force officer were reportedly burnt to death on Wednesday night as a result of fire outbreak from a burning candle in his apartment at the Air Force quarters on Ediba Road Calabar, Cross River State.

PUNCH METRO gathered that the wife of the officer had on that fateful night lit a candle in her apartment on the third floor of the quarters and locked the four children inside the house and left for a vigil at the Apostolic Faith Church.

An eyewitness, who pleaded anonymity, said the wife of the officer was in the habit of leaving the children at home to the church when the husband was not at home.

The officer was said to have been recently transferred to Abuja while the family was still in Calabar before the 'mysterious' inferno consumed his four children; three boys and one girl.

It was learnt that the timely arrival of men of the Cross River State Fire Service and the State Emergency Response Service that prevented the fire outbreak from spreading to other flats.

Although as at the time they came, three of the kids had been burnt beyond recognition, while the fourth one had sustained serious injuries and was rushed to a hospital where he gave up.

The children were said to be asleep when the fire broke out and engulfed the flat around 9pm without the knowledge of the other neighbours.

It was gathered that passers-by were the first to notice the fire and alerted the Air Force men at the gate.

When contacted on the phone for confirmation of the incident, an Air Force Officer, who craved anonymity, said he had no authority to speak on the matter.

## Police disown trigger-happy cop

Kunle Falayi

A labor Newman, a policeman, who allegedly shot a 62-year-old man, Mr. Sunday Awoyera, in the face at a checkpoint in Atan Kekere, Ipaja, Lagos on August 2, 2008, set up the checkpoint on his own volition and was not authorised to do so, the Investigative Police Officer of the case has told a Yaba Chief Magistrate's Court, Lagos.

The IPO, Patrick Nnagu, who said this during cross-examination, also told the court that the other two unnamed policemen who witnessed the alleged crime were found to be innocent after an "orderly room trial."

"After the three of them were apprehended, I conducted my investigation and they were subjected to an orderly room trial, in which the two accomplices said Newman was the one who shot the victim," he said.

The IPO also revealed that Awoyera was shot at close range with an AK-47 rifle by Newman.

Nnagu read the statement made by Awoyera, which stated, "One of the three policemen, who stopped us, checked our bus and when he realised that we were all in the same attire, he waved us through."

"Suddenly, Newman, who was a little farther away from the man who checked us, came along as we were moving and started hitting the bus with the butt of his gun, shouting that we should stop. I explained to him that his colleague had already done the checking and certified us okay."

"Newman got angry at this point and

started threatening that he would shoot me if I argued with him. He said, 'I will shoot you and run away, and nothing would happen.' Everybody in the bus was begging him not to shoot. At a point, he aimed at the ground beside the front tyre and fired.

"He immediately dipped his hand inside his pocket and produced a bullet, which he inserted in the gun. He pointed the gun at me through the driver's window and shot me at point-blank range in the jaw. That was the last thing I knew until I woke up at the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital, Ikeja, Lagos."

The Prosecutor, Cpl. Uwadiene Chinalu, asked the court for an adjourned date to enable him to call another witness for cross-examination. He said the witness was a doctor who treated Awoyera.

On June 13, 2011, THE PUNCH had published a story on Awoyera seeking the payment of the N10m damages awarded to him against the Inspector General of Police by a Lagos High Court for the injury he sustained

after being shot by Newman.

After surviving the attack, his lawyer, Mr. Femi Falana, had sued the IGP, joining Newman as the second respondent, to demand payment of the damages to his client.

Justice J.O.K. Oyewole, had awarded the damages on February 18, 2010, which has yet to be paid.

A letter signed by Dr. Oyapero Afolabi of LASUTH on behalf of Dr. Okoturo Eytuooyo, and addressed to the law firm of Falana, stated that the gunshot destroyed most of Awoyera's jaw.

"There was severe tissue loss in the lower 1/3 of the right side of the face and bone loss in the body of the right mandible," the letter stated in part.

Newman, who is now dismissed from the police, is standing trial before the court for attempting to kill Awoyera by shooting him, an offence which contravenes and is punishable under Section 320 of the Criminal Code Laws of Lagos State, 2003.

