

... City, Crime, Courts

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Ghanaian kills during fight over

Eniola Akinkuotu

Gabriel Enning and Eric were best friends; they have been living and working together since 2011 when they arrived Nigeria as illegal immigrants from Ghana. *PUNCH Metro* gathered that it was hard to find one without the other nearby. Their closeness attracted the attention of their neighbours and co-workers who eventually began to refer to them as soul mates. The unexpected, however, happened on March 12, 2012, when a fight

broke out between the two over a missing mobile phone and 22-year-old Eric lost his life in the process.

Enning, who is presently in police custody, told *PUNCH Metro* that he still found it difficult coming to terms with the tragic incident.

Narrating what transpired on that fateful day, the 23-year-old Ghanaian national said, "Eric and I have been living in Nigeria for about six months now. We both hail from Oda, Ghana, but we came to Nigeria to seek greener pastures.

"We work at Mannies, a company which manufactures ice cream and yoghurt. The company also provides accommodation for us so we both lived and worked together at Isheri-Berger, Lagos.

"On that fateful day, early in the morning, while we were preparing for work, Eric complained that he could not find his mobile phone and went berserk. He went

•Enning

Chapel pastor accuses Muslims of

Mosque came to the Living Faith Church site in large numbers. They destroyed church wall fence and the building material that was on our site. They beat the

Limited. He stated that after NITEL was liquidated and the land sold on behalf of NITEL to a buyer, the church bought the land from the buyer with the complete

It was learnt that the state town planning authority later recommended that the church should erect a shopping complex in the frontal part of the land that

immediately prevail on the culprits to avoid a reprisal.

Osiberu said, "This is an injustice. They are not the only people who know how to fight. We have people who

James Azania, Benin

Soldiers destroy illegal refineries in Edo

Two illegal refineries in Egono and Agbede villages in Etsako West Local Government Area of Edo have been destroyed by soldiers attached to the state anti-crime unit, Operation Thunderstorm.

The soldiers, who acted on a tip-off, raided the illegal refineries located in the forest. They were, however, unable to make any arrests as operators of the illegal refineries had fled before their arrival.

Charred pipes used in conveying crude oil illegally siphoned from vandalised Nigeria National Petroleum Company pipelines littered the grounds when journalists visited the scene.

At one of the refineries, more than 100 drums, some filled with crude and already refined products, were destroyed and set ablaze.

Acting Commander of Operation Thunderstorm, Major Mohammed

Abubakar, who led the operation, called on the public to assist his unit with information about such refineries.

He said, "We received information that these things are going on, so we came to destroy it even though we didn't make any arrest. It is our duty to destroy it. We want to advice people to give us information always."

'soul mate' er phone

to complain to our boss but our boss told him to wait till we all returned from work to settle the matter."

Enning said after returning from work at 4pm that day, Eric accused him of stealing the mobile phone which led to an altercation.

He said, "I told Eric to wait till our boss and our colleagues returned from work but he refused. Eric went ahead to lock the door of the room and held my trousers, shouting that I should produce his phone."

"Eric picked up a hand trowel and put it against my neck, threatening to injure me if I did not give him back his phone. I didn't know why he was so sure that I was the one that stole his phone."

"He then attempted to dispossess me of my money which was in my pocket but I resisted him. A struggle ensued and he suddenly picked up a glass bottle and hit me in the mouth, causing me to lose a tooth."

PUNCH Metro learnt

that Enning became infuriated after losing his tooth and the friends started fighting.

Enning told our correspondent that after fighting for a while, he forced the door open, went outside and picked up a piece of metal which he used to hit his friend.

"I hit Eric's hand with the metal but he was tried to collect it from me but the metal fell to the floor. I picked it up again but this time I used the metal to hit him in the back of the head. He suddenly fell to the floor and started bleeding profusely," he said.

With the help of some bystanders, Enning said he quickly rushed Eric to a hospital where he gave up the ghost.

He said, "When Eric and I were fighting outside, some people were outside watching us but they did not understand what was going on because we were speaking our native Ghanaian language."

"When he collapsed, they helped me to put him into a vehicle which we used in transporting

him to a hospital where he died.

"I never knew life was so fragile, I never intended to kill him, we were like brothers," Enning said with an emotion-laden voice.

Enning was immediately arrested by policemen attached to the Isheri Division, from where he was transferred to the state Criminal Investigation Department, Yaba.

The spokesperson for the state police command, Mr. Joseph Jaiyeoba, who confirmed the incident to our correspondent on the telephone, said the police would be diligent in its investigation.

Jaiyeoba warned members of the public to settle disputes amicably rather than resorting to violence.

He said, "People should always keep calm and settle disputes amicably because a single moment of anger could push one to commit heinous crimes which could land one behind bars."

Judge dismisses cleric's defamation suit against newspaper

Sunday Aborisade, Akure

An Akure High Court in a judgment delivered on Friday, established that a newspaper defamed a popular prophet and church founder in Akure, but dismissed the suit on the grounds of "qualified privilege."

Justice David Kolawole described as malicious the publication which described the founder Success Gate Mission, Rev. Ademisorun Turton, as a ritual murderer.

Kolawole held that the report, which was published in the Ondo State-owned Hope newspaper that portrayed the cleric as a person who engaged in rituals, was not only inaccurate but meant to defame the character of the prophet.

The court did not, however, award any damage to the prophet because the newspaper outfit had published another report which exonerated him without the prompting of the plaintiff.

Turton had, through his counsel, sued the newspaper seeking a declaration that the publication describing him as a ritualist was a defamation of his character and a calculated attempt to smear his name.

The suit filed in 2010 was sequel to a publication by the newspaper that the prophet was charged with ritual murder when in actual fact he was charged with

the killing of one Olajide Atilola.

Turton then demanded an order of perpetual injunction restraining the outfit from publishing damaging stories about him and asked for N100m.

The judge said there was a difference between ritual murder and murder and that the prophet was only charged with the latter.

Kolawole said, "It is legitimate to ask whether there is any difference between being charged with murder or murder for ritual purpose."

"For a clergyman to be accused of killing for ritual purpose, it carries a heavier

connotation than when he is accused of killing for some other purpose."

"Because of this, I am prepared to accept that the report that the plaintiff was charged for ritual murder is false and lacks accuracy," the judge added.

However, the court held that since the newspaper has moral and legal right to report to the members of the public what is going on in the public and that the plaintiff did not establish malice on the part of the newspaper.

The judge, consequently, dismissed the case and awarded N5, 000 against the plaintiff.

Teacher caught on top of pupil arraigned

Tunde Odesola, Osogbo

A 29-year-old teacher, Mr. Seun Oyeleke, has been arraigned before an Osogbo Magistrate's Court over an allegation that he raped two of his female pupils aged five and seven.

The Mathematics and Social Studies college of education graduate, who teaches at a private nursery and primary school in Osogbo, pleaded not guilty to the charges last Friday.

Alleging that the accused separately lured the two pupils to a toilet located at the back of the school, where he attempted to have sex with them, the charge sheet said the offence was contrary to the Osun State Criminal Code.

The charge sheet stated that the accused committed the offence on March 16 and 17, 2012.

Defence counsel, Mr. Abimbola Ige, applied for the bail of the accused, saying the charges against him were mere speculations.

Ige added that the suspect would provide credible sureties prior to trial.

Police prosecutor, Mr. Isiaka Ajadi, did not object to the application but drew the attention of the court to the ages of the two victims.

He also urged the court to ensure that the addresses of the prospective sureties were traceable.

The Magistrate, Mr. Olalekan Ijiyode, admitted the suspect to bail in the sum of N100,000 with two sureties in like sum.

He adjourned the matter till April 11, 2012 for mention.

PUNCH Metro had last Thursday published the

'destroying church property

only revived after receiving first aid treatment.

He said, "When they came to attack us, I went to the two armed policemen on site. They said they got

