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Pregnant woman dies days after husband's

Eniola Akinkuotu

A pregnant woman, Mrs. Funmilayo Ajibola, died last Wednesday in Badagry, Lagos State after being allegedly brutalised by her husband, Kola.

PUNCH Metro learnt that the 30-year-old housewife had been a victim of domestic abuse for years before she died on the fateful day.

Funmilayo's cousin, who spoke to our correspondent on the condition of anonymity, said Kola, a member of the National Union of Road Transport Workers, was a jealous husband who always suspected his wife's movements.

She said, "Kola is a very jealous husband. My cousin changed her phone lines more than 15 times throughout their six years marriage lasted because anytime Kola saw a strange number on her phone, he

would destroy the SIM card.

"Sometimes, if she came back late or went out, he would beat her. There was a time she visited her father and when she got back home late, Kola told her to pick between him and her father.

"According to a young girl that lives with the couple, on Sunday night, Funmilayo received a call from her maternal uncle and when Kola saw the number, he started beating her. He did not even listen to her explanation."

The cousin said when the beating got out of hand, the landlord intervened and took Funmilayo to his flat.

The landlord was said to have told Funmilayo to go back to her husband's apartment believing that his anger would have subsided but Kola was said to have continued to beat her.

PUNCH Metro learnt that although the deceased did not die after the beating, she

started exhibiting strange symptoms before her death.

Her cousin said, "Although I wasn't there, the young girl that lives with them told me that Funmilayo was unconscious for a while, making Kola to become scared.

"Kola rushed her to a nearby hospital where she started to vomit blood. The hospital refused to admit her because they owed the hospital some money.

"Kola then took her back to the house and invited an auxiliary nurse to come and attend to her but her health continued to deteriorate."

The nurse was said to have given the deceased some injections and bags of drip.

"The young girl that lives with them told me that on Tuesday, Funmilayo ate some rice but vomited it soon after. When her health did not improve, the nurse told Kola that she could no



Funmilayo



Kola

longer locate her vein," our source said.

It was learnt that when Funmilayo died on

Wednesday, Kola took her corpse to the Badagry General Hospital mortuary and told the attendant that

his wife died of pregnancy complications.

He was said to have promised to return but

Traders take over Lagos pedestrian bridge

Simon Utebor

A first time visitor in Lagos will certainly not be able to distinguish pedestrian bridges from market places. This is because the bridges have become flourishing centres for trading.

Traders display their wares on the bridges

with impunity, leaving only narrow spaces for pedestrians to use.

Due to the pressure on the bridges, many of them have started vibrating, giving serious concern about the safety of pedestrians.

Virtually all the footbridges in the state experience the

same problem of street trading. As a result, people using them have hectic time moving from one side of the bridge to the other.

From Oshodi, Ilasamaja, Cele, Orile, Anthony, Obanikoro to Ojota, among others, the situation is not

different.

A pedestrian, Mr. Johnson Nwokolo, said the situation on Charity footbridge at Oshodi is more worrisome.

Nwokolo said, "The bridge is just opposite the Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlement Centre. On the bridge, the

situation is the same- be it in the morning or evening. Every trader has a stand.

"Many of the traders behave as if the place belongs to them. If you mistakenly march on their wares, you are in for a big trouble - you really need to mind yourself or have the traders to contend with. It is that pathetic. It seems the relevant authorities have given up on the place."

A resident, Angela Okosun, said Cele and Ijesha pedestrian bridges were also notorious for street trading.

According to Okosun, the traders on those footbridges are a bit restrained because of occasional presence of environmental task force officials in the daytime.

But she said in the evening, as from 5pm, the traders return in full swing.

"If you come to these places between 5pm and 11pm, you will see the madness going on there. You hardly find a space to pass through.

Weekends are even worse, she said.

At Onipanu footbridge, apart from traders, there are destitute who have converted the bridge into a place to beg for alms.

But a trader on Charity footbridge, Mrs. Joy Ebo, challenged the government to provide shops for them.

"Most of the shops built by the government are too expensive. Where do I get such money? If not for the money, you won't see me here because it is not the best place to trade. Government should have sympathy on us. We are only using this to make a living," Eboka said.

A trader on Cele Bridge who did not want his name mentioned, said he came to the bridge as the last resort.

"I was working in a company before my employment was terminated. I have children to cater for. I cannot just stay at home idle. My coming here is just to keep body and soul



Pedestrian bridge at Charity Bus stop, on Oshodi-Apapa Expressway, Lagos. Inset: Another section of the bridge. Photo: Simon Utebor

The Katampe community, Abuja has honoured a philanthropist, Chief James Jephthah, with the traditional title of Sardauna of Katampe for bringing electricity to the community and providing potable water for the people. Speaking during the ceremony

Philanthropist honoured for funding power, water projects

on Saturday, Secretary to the Katampe traditional council, Mr. Isamaila Jikoko, said Jephthah, a native of Bayelsa State, had contributed immensely to the socio-economic development of the area, adding that this made the community's

Adelani Adepegba, Abuja
traditional ruler, Alhaji Adamu Diger, to honour him.

Jikoko said, "Apart from connecting Katampe to the national grid, Jephthah has also promised to

construct a link road from Mpape Road to our community, and we still expect more from him as far as socio-economic development is concerned."

Chairman of Bwari Local Government Area, Mr. Peter

Yohanna, who described honouree as a detribalised Nigerian, said Jephthah deserved the title.

Jephthah said he was humbled by the honour, adding that he had been motivated to do more for the people of Katampe.

dies two brutality

fled. Our correspondent learnt that neighbours immediately informed members of Funmilayo's family who then came to 5, Ilufe Street, Ibereko Bus Stop, Badagry where the couple resided.

It was learnt that when all efforts to trace Kola failed, his younger brother, was arrested by policemen attached to Badagry Police Division.

At the station, Kola's brother revealed his location and policemen immediately arrested him.

A police source told our correspondent that the 33-year-old suspect admitted beating his wife.

"I am not a doctor but there were bruises on the corpse and there is no doubt that Kola beat her up and he has confessed. He however said he did not kill her," he said.

Funmilayo's cousin however berated the police

dges

together. I move from one bridge to another to sell as the cost of renting a shop is too high in Ijesha area where I reside," he said.

He said because of constant harassment by government agents in the day time, he and others chose to come and display their wares in the evenings.

He appealed to the government to reduce the cost of stalls and to check shylock landlords in the state.

When contacted, an aide to the Marshal-General, Kick Against Indiscipline, Capt. Danjuma Maigeri (retd.), said he was in a meeting.

However, the aide, who declined to give his name, said trading on bridges was illegal.

"It is against the law to trade on pedestrian bridges. Our men have been arresting violators. Traders are advised in their own interest to desist from the act," he said.

on how the investigations were being handled.

She said, "Kola has been beating Funmilayo for a long time to the extent that the landlord had issued them a quit notice for fear that he might kill her.

"Police should have invited the landlord for questioning as well as the nurse that was treating Funmilayo. Also, the case should have been transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department by now," she said.

When contacted the spokesperson for the state police command, Ngozi Braide, said the command

would ensure that a thorough investigation was carried out.

She said, "Investigation will be done professionally. The Badagry Division has to conclude preliminary investigations before transferring the case to the SCID.

"Also, Kola will be charged with murder because all evidence points to him. It's a clear case and there will be no cover up.

"We are waiting for approval from a magistrate court before going ahead with the autopsy and once all things are in order, he'll be charged to court."

30 million children live on the streets – NGO

A Non-Governmental Organisation, Heart of Gold Foundation, has raised the alarm that 30 million children live on the streets in Africa.

The President of HOGF, Mrs. Onye Ogechukwu, said this on Friday in Abuja during a party organised by the foundation for school children to mark the yearly June 16 Day of the African Child.

She said the Federal Government should include skills acquisition in the curriculum for primary and secondary school education.

She said, "The (June 16) Day also draws attention to the lives of African children, which also focuses attention on the plight of the estimated 30 million street children across the continent."

Ogechukwu noted that the 'street children,' "have family ties that are weak or non-existent, are forced to develop survival strategies, rely on the street as their main place of stay and for whom the street has replaced the family as a place for socialisation and face specific major risks."

She therefore called for a new thinking in expanding the career choices of youths, particularly those unlikely to pursue education.

Friday Olorok, Abuja

According to her, the HOGF was motivated to establish a skills acquisition and career club in primary schools in the Federal Capital Territory as part of initiatives of helping children in their formative years to find alternative career choices.

Ogechukwu said, "Very dear to the heart of HOGF is self reliance driven education. This is the present day reality of our country. Nigerians, including millions of our youths are graduating

from school with no hope of gainful employment.

"Therefore, HOGF skills acquisition and career club seeks to harness this early period in a child's life and give them a desired future.

"It is obvious that there are a lot of skills, which need to be developed, but which are often under rated, as unattractive career option.

"There is need to change this narrow perception that one can only make it through certain job areas. We need to change that and it is what the club is about."

Falling tree kills chief, injures others in Ilesa

Tunde Odesola, Osogbo

A chief in Oke-Eso area of Ilesa, Osun State, Chief Felix Amure, on Sunday died after an Iroko tree fell on him in Ita-Akogun.

Although there were rumours that two other persons died in the incident, the state headquarters of Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps confirmed the death of the 72-year-old chief, who is the Elemoso of Oke-Eso.

The Head, Disaster Management, NSCDC in state, Mr. Olaniyi Babalola,

said only one person died in the incident while two others were injured.

Babalola said the injured were taken to Wesley Gild Hospital, Ilesa, for treatment.

He said, "It is only one person that died. Two sustained severe injuries and they are unconscious, others who sustained minor injuries have been treated in various clinics and have been discharged."

Babalola gave the names of those injured as Adewale Adebayo (49) and Abu Musa (28).

But some residents said two commercial motorcyclists and the chief died in the incident, which has thrown the entire community into mourning.

A former chairman, Ilesa-West Local Government Area, Mr. Edward Keshinro, who spoke with our correspondent, described the incident as shocking.

Keshinro said, "There was neither wind nor rain for the huge tree to suddenly be uprooted. It is a strange occurrence; the tree had been there for several decades.

"The tree suddenly fell

to the devastating effects illicit drug production. If you fail to report the drug baron in your neighbourhood, they may destroy the lives of people including your children."

The state commander of the agency, Mrs. Omotund Kolesho, in her address decried the level of drug abuse in the state.

She said the command discovered and destroyed three cannabis farms in Chikanda in Baruten, and Kaiama local government areas of the state.

"A warehouse containing 358 kilogrammes of cannabis was also discovered at Gaa Odota, Ilorin. These efforts have helped to reduce the quantity of drugs in circulation in the state."

Governor Abdulfatah Ahmed, who was represented by the state Commissioner for Youths and Sports, Mr. Anthony Towoju, pledged government's readiness to join forces with the anti-drug agency in ridding the state of illegal drugs.

"We know the problem of drugs particularly on our youths. The state government will partner the NDLEA in ensuring that Kwara State is free from illegal drugs. I also wish to commend the efforts of the state command of the agency," the governor said.

and killed three persons including a high chief. The high chief, who was coming from the church, was well dressed in native attire. The tree blocked the entire road."

A chieftain of the Action Congress of Nigeria, Mr. Gbenga Fowowe, who also was a one-time chairman, Ilesa-West Local Government Council, said some persons were still trapped under the tree.

He said, "It's a terrible scene. Some victims are still trapped under the tree. Many people were wounded."

NDLEA destroys 3,450kg of drugs



NDLEA and Kwara officials at the drug destruction

Kunle Falayi

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency has destroyed 3,450.407kg of drug exhibits in Ilorin, Kwara State.

The drugs comprising 3,418.319kg of cannabis and 32.088kg of psychotropic substances were seized by the agency from drug dealers in the state.

According to a statement by NDLEA's Head of Public

Affairs, Mr. Mitchell Ofoyeju, on Sunday, the NDLEA Chairman, Ahmadu Giade, was represented by the agency's Director of Administration and Finance, Dr. Daniel Ismaila, at the event which was also attended by the wife of the governor, Mrs. Omolewa Ahmed.

The NDLEA boss said the agency would continue to identify, trace and destroy cannabis plantations in the state.

He said, "The agency is committed to eradicating the production, trafficking and abuse of illicit drugs in this state. Drug trafficking is an organised crime that works like a two-edged sword affecting the entire society and must therefore be tackled."

"We are working towards a drug-free society. Our surveillance mechanisms will also trace hidden warehouses of illicit drugs. We shall not only seize these exhibits, but even the warehouses will not be spared. We shall continue to smoke out the drug dealers from their hideouts and prosecute them accordingly."

"This exercise is a clear indication that local government areas, like city centres, are not immune