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## Police killed 'foreigner' for driving against traffic – Eyewitness

APRIL 15, 2013 BY ENIOLA AKINKUOTU

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**The Toyota Highlander SUV. Inset: Korie**  
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A trader who witnessed the killing of a driver, Santos Korie, by policemen in the Mushin area of Lagos State last Thursday has said the policemen opened fire on him because he drove against traffic.

The witness, Tayo Odunlami, told *PUNCH Metro* that the driver, Korie, who was earlier described as a foreigner, but had now been properly identified as a Nigeria, was not the sole occupant of the vehicle.

Odunlami added that his younger brother was also present.

Narrating what occurred on the fateful day, Odunlami said, "Around 7am last Thursday, I was carrying out the weekly market sanitation at Daleko Market when I saw a silver-coloured Toyota Highlander Sports Utility Vehicle coming from Ilesamaja direction.

"On getting beneath the bridge and driving towards Mushin, he noticed that there was a roadblock due to construction and he claimed he did not know the alternative route to take so a newspaper vendor advised him to reverse and drive against traffic, make a U-turn and then ascend the Daleko Bridge.

"He drove against traffic and as he was about making a U-turn to ascend the bridge, he was accosted by the policemen.

"The policemen were talking to him, but he was smiling and did not roll down his window. The next thing I heard were four gunshots and everyone fled. The man's car continued to move probably because he had taken his legs off the brakes. The vehicle then rammed into the side of the bridge, damaging the car."

*PUNCH Metro* investigations revealed that the killer policemen were attached to the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority.

The witness told our correspondent that the policemen, however, came in without LASTMA officials in a commercial bus which had been seized from its owner and then used it to carry out an illegal operation on that particular day.

He said the surviving occupant of the vehicle had reported the matter at Area D Command.

He said, "The policemen usually work with LASTMA under the bridge and due to the ongoing construction, motorists are usually allowed to drive against traffic. The policemen wanted to extort money from people that morning. That was why they came in a commercial bus and not the LASTMA van.

"After they killed the man, they fled and some commercial motorcycle riders chased them but they shot into the air to scare people away. They then jumped on a motorcycle and fled.

"Meanwhile, the other occupant of the SUV came down and started crying for help. We then advised him to go and report the matter at Area D. The Area Commander, Omololu Bishi, arrived at the scene but by then, the man was already dead."

It was learnt that some foreign passports were found inside the deceased's vehicle, which made people to initially believe that he was a foreigner.

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However, our correspondent who visited the scene on Saturday learnt that he was a Nigerian whose real name was Onyekachi Korie.

**PUNCH Metro** had reported on Friday that two policemen, Idu and Ameh, as well as a tout, Sunday Sylvester, had been arrested by the police and transferred to the Special Anti-Robbery Squad.

A police source at SARS told our correspondent that the killer policemen had written confessional statements.

The source said, "The murder was a case of police extortion that went out of hand. However, there will be no cover up on the matter as we have arrested both killer policemen as well as those who have been engaging on illegal traffic duty."

The police source told our correspondent that the suspects confessed that they usually engaged in illegal duty between 5am and 7am.

He said, "The police suspects said they usually seized commercial buses and then used it to extort money from people early in the morning before LASTMA men come for morning shifts. Sylvester also confessed that he had driven the policemen on over 10 illegal operations.

"He said after arresting traffic offenders, they would take them to a corner and negotiate a specific amount of money and then release them. He said offenders were never taken to LASTMA office because they would need to register the case and by so doing, they would not make any money."

However, the police spokesperson, Ngozi Braide, had said the killers might have been hired killers in police uniform. She, however, confirmed that arrests had been made.

Our correspondent, who visited the Area D Command on Saturday, saw the deceased's vehicle with registration number, EH778FST on the premises.

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