

18th October, 2013

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Man in five-month coma dies

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Saheed Waliu

Saheed Waliu, the 28-year-old, who was in a coma five months after being allegedly brutalised by some policemen, is dead.

Waliu was said to have given up the ghost at about 9am last Sunday at the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital, Ikeja, Lagos.

PUNCH Metro had on October 10, 2013, reported that Waliu was hospitalised at LASUTH, after suffering a brutal attack from yet-to-be identified policemen attached to the Highway patrol, along the LASU-Igando Road on May 8, 2013.

He was reportedly on his way home with a friend, Sherif Eleda, when the incident occurred. Waliu's aged mother had told **PUNCH Metro** that the policemen had thrown an iron rod at Waliu, causing him to fall from his bike.

He was said to have suffered a cracked skull and a broken leg in the process.

No formal complaint was made at the nearest police station to the scene of the incident. Waliu's family at the time, were said to be more preoccupied with how to save his life.

Despite the two surgeries performed on his head, Waliu reportedly never regained consciousness since the night of the attack.

His aged mother, Sadiat, had reportedly kept vigil through the five-month ordeal in the hope that Waliu would get better.

His sister, Taiwo, said, "We were outside the hospital ward as usual that Sunday when a nurse called to tell us that something was wrong. There was only one doctor available because of the strike. The doctor gave us some prescription to buy; she didn't say what exactly had changed in Waliu's condition. We left to buy the drugs. By the time we returned, they told us he was dead." He was buried on Tuesday according to Muslim rites.

Already, a non-governmental organisation, Know Your Rights Initiative, have written a petition to the Inspector General of Police on the issue.

KYRI Legal Adviser, Mr. Omo Egbekuse, had said, "As soon as the matter came to our attention, we wrote a petition to the Inspector General of Police, the Lagos State Police Commissioner and the Assistant Inspector General of Police, Zone 2. We haven't heard from them yet but expect that action would be taken in respect of this matter."

The Force Police Public Relations Officer, CSP Frank Mba, when contacted, said, "We condole with the family and friends of the deceased, who is said to have died on Sunday. However, while the Force does not condone any act of irresponsibility from its officers, we are constrained at the moment because of insufficient facts.

"As it is, Waliu's family cannot identify the policemen by names, the make of their car, registration number or



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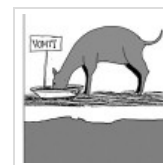


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the inscription of the vehicle. These are facts that make it easy to trace the offending officers, bring them to justice and quickly conclude the investigation.

"While it is understandable that the deceased's family might not have taken note of some of these facts on the night of the incident, at least someone should have noticed the name tag of the alleged police assailants.

"If the family of the deceased can make this information available to us, it would greatly help our investigation and ensure that those alleged to be responsible for Waliu's death are brought to justice."

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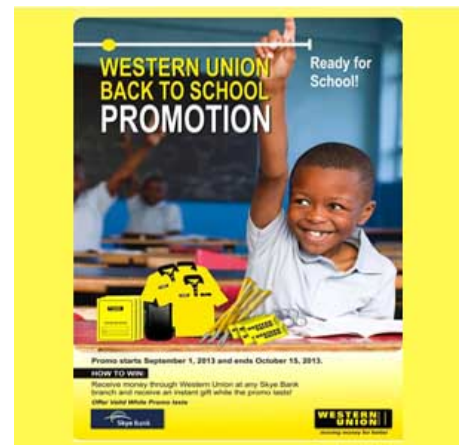
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