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## Man drowns while swimming to win bet

NOVEMBER 26, 2013 BY SAMSON FOLARIN

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| credits: Samson Folarin

A 25-year-old man, Toheeb Jimoh, has drowned in a Lagos river while reportedly swimming to win a bet.

He had allegedly bragged that he could swim the Lagos Lagoon from a particular point to the shore on Saturday evening.

It was learnt that when some people challenged his claim, he had allegedly dared them to place a bet. After the bet was placed, he reportedly went on a boat to the point and jumped into the lagoon hoping to swim to the shore.

Friends of the deceased, who had accompanied him on a boat, were said to have fled the scene after he did not make it out of the water.

The incident, which occurred at Aiyedun Street, Bariga, was said to have caused commotion among residents who trooped to the site, hoping to save Jimoh.

The corpse of Jimoh was said to have been recovered around 7pm same day and buried beside the water around 12am in line with the traditions.

Our correspondent learnt that the late Abeokuta, Ogun State indigene, had only recently gained admission into the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta before the tragedy struck.

A source who spoke on the condition of anonymity said, "He and some of his friends were actually fond of betting and gambling. So that evening, they decided to take the betting to another level. Toheeb told them he could swim from the Third Mainland Bridge end of the river to the shore.

"When the boat they took got to that point, which was a little close to the shore, he gave his clothes to his brother and jumped into the water.

"His friends who were in the boat waited for him at the shore without success. After it dawned on them that something was amiss, his younger brother raised the alarm. By the time people got to the scene, he had died."

When *PUNCH Metro* visited the site where the incident took place, he observed that the scene was directly under the Third Mainland Bridge.

Leaves, pure water sachets, and other dirt were seen floating on the river shore. The area was mainly occupied by shanties and make-shift structures.

Residents of the area refused to comment for fear of being implicated.

When our correspondent visited the Jimohs on Ajenifuja Street, he was told they had traveled to complete the burial rites. Their bungalow was also quiet, while the street was deserted.

A resident on the street, Tihamiyu Abdullateef, said the deceased was highly pious.

He said Jimoh had earlier gone on a boat to "play a game with his friends", and returned without any incident.

Abdullateef, however, said the deceased merely went to the lagoon to defecate after he became pressed.

"Then, he decided to swim and wash his body. His brother, Wale, waited at the shore. When he was swimming back, he just lost breath, and was exhausted. His brother saw him drowning but did not suspect that anything was wrong until it was too late."

When our correspondent visited Bariga Police Station, a senior official told him that the police heard about the case informally.

The officer, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because he was not permitted to speak for the police, said, "It was not reported here, and there is little we can do although we heard of it,"

The state Police Public Relations Officer, Ngozi Braide, said she was in a conference and promised to call back.

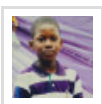
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**Contact:** [editor@punchng.com](mailto:editor@punchng.com) (mailto:editor@punchng.com)

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