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## Key witness in murder case stabbed to death

DECEMBER 12, 2013 BY ENIOLA AKINKUOTU

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There was tension in the Yaba and Bariga areas of Lagos State on Tuesday after the murder of a 36-year-old man, Segun Ogbere, who was killed by members of a gang known as Downtown Boys.

*PUNCH Metro* learnt that Ogbere, who went by the pseudonym, Shaggy, was also alleged to be the leader of a gang known as Shaggy Boys.

According to Police sources, the victim is the key witness in a murder case against a former leader of the Ilajes in the state.

It was said that Ogbere was trailed from the Ebute Meta Magistrate's court by Downtown Boys led by one Balogun, aka Small Jaypron, and hacked to death.

A police source said, "The former leader is facing a murder charge at the Ebute Meta Magistrate's court for the death of one James Areomiye, who was slain last year. Ogbere was our only witness in the case.

"We were told that as Ogbere was about leaving the court, he saw some Downtown Boys around the court so he sneaked out of the premises, entered a commercial tricycle and fled. The hoodlums saw him and chased him.

"Ogbere saw his friend driving a tipper so he alighted from the tricycle, entered the passenger seat of the tipper, thinking the thugs were no longer on his trail. However, the assailants soon caught up with him."

*PUNCH Metro* learnt that around 3pm, Small Jaypron, in company with three others in a vehicle, crossed the tipper around Adeshina Street, off University Road, Abule Oja, and dragged Ogbere out of the vehicle.

Eyewitnesses told *PUNCH Metro* that the hoodlums, who were wielding guns and knives, stabbed the deceased many times before fleeing.

“About four guys alighted from a red Volkswagen Gulf car and dragged the guy (Ogbere) out of the passenger seat and started stabbing the guy repeatedly and ripped out his intestines.

“Probably because this is a residential area and it’s always quiet, the guys did not fire a shot so as not to attract the attention of men of the Rapid Response Squad who are stationed on University Road.”

Our correspondent learnt that the incident caused a traffic snarl from University of Lagos gate down to Onike as loyalists of Shaggy were said to have protested his murder.

A landlady in the area, who wished to remain anonymous due to the sensitivity of the case, said policemen attached to Sabo Police Division did not respond to the distress call until an hour after the incident.

She said, “After the killing, about five of Shaggy’s boys, who were wielding guns, stormed the scene. As RRS men attempted to recover the corpse, the boys protested and beat up one Sergeant Innocent and vandalised the patrol vehicle.

“When we saw that the police were being overwhelmed, we alerted the Divisional Police Officer, Sabo, SP Anthony Aruna, but his men did not arrive until an hour later. It was members of the Odua Peoples Congress that were able to subdue them and arrest one of them.”

Meanwhile, our correspondent, learnt that Shaggy’s boys have threatened to carry out reprisals for their leader’s murder

Our correspondent, who visited Ilaje, Bariga area, on Wednesday, observed six police patrol vehicles in the area.

A senior police officer attached to Bariga Police Division, said, “We are here to ensure that the area remains peaceful. Ilaje is Shaggy’s stronghold and we want to forestall any reprisal.”

Police Public Relations Officer, Ngozi Braide, told our correspondent that the police had commenced investigations into the murder.

*PUNCH Metro* had reported that Balogun was arrested and charged with the murder of five people and was remanded in Ikoyi Prison but was released under controversial circumstances.

It had also been reported that many others had been killed in Bariga, Akoka, Yaba and Abule Ijesa areas due to the rivalry between the two gangs.

Braide said, “I am aware of the killing and the matter is now being investigated at the State Criminal Investigation Department Yaba. We are also on the trail of the suspects.”

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