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Ibereko robbery: Sad Easter for pharmacist's family

APRIL 22, 2014 BY OLALEYE ALUKO 2 COMMENTS

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The late Onuoha.

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Armed robbers kill a pharmacist, Mr. Chukwudi Onuoha, in Ibereko, Badagry, Lagos, OLALEYE ALUKO reports

Many parts of Lagos may have had a pleasant Easter celebration, but it was all gloom for the Chukwudi Onuoha family in Ibereko area, Badagry, Lagos. The late Onuoha was shot dead during a robbery attack in the area on Wednesday night.

On Sunday afternoon when Easter celebration was still on, the compound of the 62-year-old pharmacist was quiet and devoid of joy. The name 'Onuoha' may not ring a bell in the larger Ibereko area, but Hossana Pharmaceutical Stores is a household name among the residents.

About 9pm on the fateful day, a gang of armed robbers had invaded the area, and held residents to ransom for about two hours. While they killed Onuoha,

a soldier was also said to have been shot in the leg.

The pharmacist, who hails from Orsu in Imo State, and had lived in Ibereko for over 30 years, was attacked by the three-man gang in the pharmaceutical stores, alongside two of his attendants.

It was learnt that the robbers arrived the stores on motorcycles, armed with guns and other dangerous weapons. They asked two attendants inside to lie face down, and collected the day's proceeds.

However, not satisfied with what they had got, the robbers dragged Onuoha outside, and when he was attempting to flee from them, they shot him in the back. The man was said to have died while he was being rushed to the General Hospital in Badagry.

When our correspondent visited their residence on Sunday afternoon, the wife of the deceased, Mrs. Florence Onuoha, with a voice laden with sorrow and shock, said she could still not believe her husband was gone.

"He was a very active man, a high chief in his home town as well. We were still together at home that evening around 7pm, discussing. He said he was going out briefly to check the sales in his stores. That was the end. The next call I heard was around 9.30pm, that he had been shot by armed robbers. It is still hard for me to believe," the wife explained.

She added that her husband had done the burial of his mother on January 13 this year, not knowing that he would soon meet an untimely death.

An attendant in one of the pharmacy stores, Mr. Victor Ohaegbulam, also narrated the incident, "Pharmacist Hossana, as oga is fondly called, was just murdered mercilessly by some never-do-well touts. He spent only a few minutes in the stores and as a football lover, headed for a viewing centre to watch Barcelona-Madrid match



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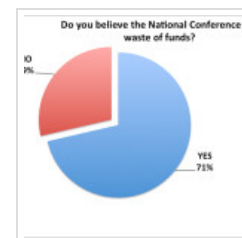


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playing that evening.

"No sooner had he returned from the first half of the match than the robbers attacked our stores. They had raided about two restaurants and a newly-opened hotel before getting to us," he said.

A resident in the area, one Mr. Andrew (surname withheld) lamented the high incidence of armed robbery attacks in Iberekro, and called on the government to provide adequate security for the people.

"We have several night clubs here, restaurants and bars which may not be entirely trusted, as these could be hideouts for criminals. I want security operatives to increase their presence in this area, and save us from continuous harassment by armed robbers," he pleaded.

Onuoha's first child and daughter, Jennifer, who is undergoing the National Youth Service Corps programme, said it was still a shock to her that her father had been killed.

"I still cannot believe he is dead. I cannot fathom that reality. You know, there was a way he called me that made me feel very happy.

"Particularly, last Saturday, April 19 was my birthday and he could have called me again, but there was no such because he's no more," she said with a shaky voice.

Jennifer is undergoing the youth service in Calabar, Cross River State, and had to travel home at the weekend when she heard the news that her father had been shot dead.

The younger brother to the deceased, Mr. Edwin Onuoha, said the incident had been reported to the Badagry Police Division. The corpse has been moved to the mortuary at the General Hospital.

As of 6pm on Monday when this report was being filed, efforts made to reach the Police Public Relations Officer, Ngozi Braide, to comment on the Badagry robbery incident proved abortive, as calls and a text message to her phone were not replied.

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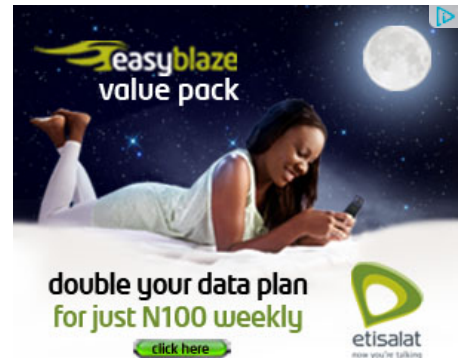
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