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Family accuses yam seller of killing bricklayer

MAY 12, 2014 BY ETIME EKPIMAH 3 COMMENTS

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The site of the alleged murder. Inset: Ekemini

| credits: Etim Ekpimah

A yam seller at Itam Market, Itu Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State, identified simply as Sunny, has been accused of killing an 18-year-old bricklayer, Ekemini Etim.

Sunny, an indigene of Ebonyi State, was said to have invited Ekemini to his uncompleted building to collect N3,500 that he (Sunny) owed him.

The sum was said to be the payment for the blocks Ekemini earlier moulded for the yam seller.

A cousin to Ekemini, Mr. Donald Efanga, told *PUNCH Metro* that Ekemini left a few minutes later to collect the money, but did not return home. He said they had thought he went somewhere else.

Efanga said, "Later in the evening, Sunny came to a drinking parlour that we own and asked after Ekemini, saying that the deceased left his site about five minutes after collecting the money."

According to the cousin, on Tuesday morning around 8am, Sunny came again to the drinking parlour and asked them if they had seen Ekemini.

"We still told him that we had yet to see him. But we were alerted to an incident later that evening, and we got to know that Ekemini was dead.

PUNCH Metro gathered that Sunny hired an ambulance to the site and dug out Ekemini's corpse from where he hid it by the left side of his uncompleted building

He said, "When he took the ambulance to the site and dug out Ekemini's remains which he had buried near the foundation of the building, the ambulance driver asked Sunny to produce the deceased's relatives to sign necessary papers before he could convey the corpse to a mortuary.

"It was when the exchange led to a serious argument between Sunny and the ambulance driver that some people went to investigate the matter. On seeing the people, Sunny fled to the police station."

Ekemini's mother, Mrs. Theresa Etim, said she did not need money, but Sunny's head for killing her son.

She said the police were shielding Sunny from facing the wrath of the people after killing her son.

She said that two of her family members, Miss Mary Usa and Mr. Emmanuel Edet, were being detained at the police station for allegedly vandalising Sunny's house.

"The police arrested two of our family members and accused them of vandalising Sunny's house. We learnt that the police are trying to help Sunny to flee to Ebonyi State, his home state. We will not allow it to

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happen," she said.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Akwa Ibom State Command, Mr. Etim Dickson, said murder cases were handled by the State Criminal Investigation Department and not by police divisions.

He stated that though the police divisions had the power to arrest people in murder cases, the actual matter was usually transferred to police headquarters for proper investigation.

He said, "This is not a matter of the police helping the suspect to escape justice; there is nothing like that.

"If the people had concrete proof that Ekemini was killed by Sunny; let them substantiate it."

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