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Vigilante shoots self dead while scaring away thieves

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Ekundayo

| credits: Samson Folarin

A member of a neighbourhood watch, Ogundare Ekundayo, has shot himself dead while attempting to scare away thieves from the Ebute-Meta area of Lagos State.

PUNCH Metro learnt that the deceased was among a three-man team guarding Osholanke Street, Ebute Meta.

There were, however, two of them on duty on the fateful day.

It was gathered that around 4am, when they were expected to round off work, Ekundayo reportedly shot into the air to scare away lurking thieves as was the guards' custom.

As he fired a shot, the bullet hit an object which ricocheted it towards him.

The bullet was said to have struck him in the head.

His duty colleague, Fatai Raimi, reportedly ran to the spot upon hearing the shot, and discovered the victim dead.

The case was reported at the Denton Police Division while Ekundayo's remains were taken to the Mainland General Hospital mortuary.

The police arrested Raimi, who insisted that he was innocent.

He said, "I have known the deceased for some time now. He was my boss; he recruited me into the vigilance group, but we were employed by the community.

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"There were three of us guarding Osholanke Street, but the third person did not come that day because he was ill.

"My master (Ekundayo) and I were together, but when it was getting to 4am, he went down the street alone.

"I suddenly heard a shot from his gun and I rushed there only to see he had mistakenly shot himself dead."

A source told *PUNCH Metro* that the victim was not properly trained on how to use a gun.

The source said the police were investigating how he came by the gun he was using for his job.

He said, "The man was not trained to use a gun. He did not handle it well and when he opened fire, apparently to tell the residents they were done for the day and to scare any thief, the bullet hit him instead.

"But one thing that is also not clear is how the man and his team had access to a gun. We are investigating all these."

Our correspondent learnt that the police could not conduct an autopsy on the victim due to the pressure from his relatives who wanted him buried.

His corpse was said to have been released to the family for burial, while the suspect was transferred to the State Department of Criminal Investigation.

The Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Joe Ofor, when contacted on the incident said he would call back. But he had yet to do so as of the time of filing this report.

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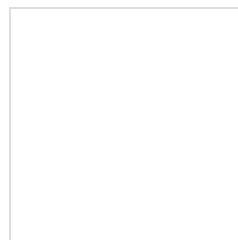
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