

# I killed my friend in self-defence, says cobbler

Samson Folarin

**T**HE police in Lagos have arrested a 20-year-old cobbler, Awolosi Ademola, for allegedly stabbing his friend, identified only as Akeem, to death in the Mushin area of Lagos State.

*PUNCH Metro* learnt that the two had been friends for some time but always had disagreements over minor issues which had led to scuffles.

Ademola, an indigene of Ogun State, who had his shop around the railway line, said he started keeping Akeem at arm's length when he began smoking hemp.

He claimed that Akeem had attacked him for no reason on Tuesday around 10pm in his home, adding that he stabbed the victim in self-defence.

He said, "We have been friends for a long time but I chose to separate from him when he started living recklessly. He always tried to harass me even for no reason.

"On that Tuesday, I was working on a shoe in my shop. I needed a knife to complete the work, so I rushed home to get a small table knife. I did not return it until the close of work that day.

"On my way home, I saw Akeem standing in a corner close to my house and I just passed him. On getting home, I was told he had been there for a long time and I immediately suspected he was out for trouble; I chose not to talk to him.

"Instead, I called a friend, Idris, and reported Akeem to him. He advised me not to make trouble with him. While I was seeing off Idris, who had also come to visit me that night at about 10pm, Akeem emerged from nowhere and started punching me, which was his usual way of harassing me.

"When I saw he was overpowering me, I brought out the knife to scare him. But unfortunately, while we were struggling for the knife, I stabbed him in the hand."

The suspect said when he observed that the victim started bleeding, he fled the scene.

He said a neighbour later called him on the phone to demand money for Akeem's treatment, but since he did not have any, he could do nothing.



• Ademola

Our correspondent learnt that the victim was rushed to a herbal clinic, where he lost a lot of blood.

"Our neighbours reported what happened to my father, and he called me and advised me not to come home, that he would handle the matter.

"At about 5pm the next day, a woman called me saying the case was very serious. I chose to go out to see if some of my friends could help me with money.

"I was on my way to a friend's house when some guys on a motorcycle parked in front of me and asked if I was the one that stabbed Akeem. They took me to the neighbourhood where I was informed that Akeem was dead. They alleged I stabbed him with a poisonous knife," he added.

*PUNCH Metro* learnt that the suspect was taken to the Alakara Police Division from where he was transferred to the State Department of Criminal Investigation, while the remains of Akeem were deposited in a morgue.

Ademola, who is the first of five children, appealed for clemency, saying he did not mean to kill Akeem.

"It was not an intentional act; he was my friend. I have known him since secondary school. I stopped relating with him because he started smoking hemp and living a bad life and my father asked me to stop being friends with him," he said.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Joe Offor, when contacted, promised to get back, but he had yet to do so as of the time of filing this report.