

Inspector falls off speeding commercial bus, dies

January 14, 2016



Oshodi-Apapa Expressway

25819

Samson Folarin

The police have arrested a 40-year-old driver, Moshood Ekunsumi, for allegedly killing a police inspector, Stephen Nzerem, on the Apapa-Oshodi Expressway.

The suspect's conductor, who is at large, has also been declared wanted by the Nigeria Police Force in connection with the death.

PUNCH Metro learnt that Ekunsumi, a father of three, plied the Airport Road area and had resumed duty on the fateful morning.

However, a police team was said to have flagged down the bus along the road, with the aim of going on an operation with it.

The driver, who immediately sensed what they were up to, drove off.

But the deceased was said to have jumped onto the vehicle to apprehend the driver.

The driver was said to have taken the victim away and was speeding when another vehicle crossed his path and he stepped on the brake pedal.

It was learnt that although both the policeman and the conductor were flung off the bus as the brake was applied, only the inspector died.

His skull was said to have been smashed by an oncoming trailer and he died on the spot.

The driver and the conductor were said to have fled the scene and abandoned the bus.

The police, however, arrested the owner of the vehicle.

The matter was subsequently transferred to the State Department of Criminal Investigation, from where investigations led to the arrest of Ekunsumi.

The bus owner, Otaru Joseph, said he had cautioned the driver over his conduct.

He said, "But he did not listen to me. After the incident happened, I thought he would also call me to let me know what happened, but instead, he called and said my vehicle was involved in an accident and cut the call. He didn't call again and he switched off his mobile phones. He fled to Ondo State where he thought nobody would get him.

"I was the one that was first arrested and detained. I would have suffered and died over what I knew nothing about."

Ekunsumi said his action was not intentional.

He said, "I did not do it intentionally. It was not the first time that the police would hijack our vehicle for

their operation.

“But that day, I did not know what happened to me. The policeman just clung to the vehicle and because I was on motion, I could not stop.

“I applied the brakes and he fell off the bus and died. I regret my action.”

The suspect, was, however, arraigned before an Ebute-Meta Magistrate’s Court on two counts of murder.

The charge read in part, “That you, Moshood Ekunsumi, and one other at large, on August 26, 2015, at about 8.30am, at Jakande bus stop, on the Apapa-Oshodi Expressway, in the Lagos Magisterial District, did unlawfully kill one Inspector Stephen Nzerem, aged 51, by pushing him out of a fast moving commercial bus.”

The police prosecutor, Cousin Adams, said the offence was punishable under sections 231, 221 of the Criminal Law of Lagos State, Nigeria, 2011.

The defendant’s plea was not taken.

Cousin thereafter applied for the remand of the defendant in prison custody pending the release of legal advice from the Directorate of Public Prosecutions.

The defence counsel, however, objected the application, urging the court to conduct a preliminary enquiry.

The magistrate, Mrs. H.O. Omisore, called the Investigating Police Officer from the SDCL.

After listening to the IPO, the magistrate criticised the defendant for being reckless with his vehicle.

She also berated the police for wanting to forcefully take over the bus when the driver was not willing to release it.

She pointed out that what happened did not qualify for the murder charge brought by the police.

She, thereafter, adjourned the matter till Monday, January 18, 2016, for ruling.

Copyright PUNCH.

All rights reserved. This material, and other digital content on this website, may not be reproduced, published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in whole or in part without prior express written permission from PUNCH.

Contact: editor@punchng.com