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Police flee as robbers abduct couple, kill guard

January 20, 2016

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Samson Folarin

Tragedy struck on Monday as armed robbers shot dead a security guard, identified only as Kayode, in front of the Ibafo Police Division.

Kayode, a member of the Oodua People's Congress, was among residents who responded to the distress call of a couple abducted by the robbers in their Landcruiser SUV.

The couple, Oluwakunmi Ayodeji, an engineer, and his pregnant wife, Oyin, were returning from a maternity centre behind the police station when they were attacked by the gang.

Policemen at the Ibafo division were said to have hurriedly shut the gate to the station and shunned calls for help.

PUNCH Metro learnt that the robbers, after getting to the *Lotto* end of the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, shot Oluwakunmi in the eye region and abandoned him and his wife on the road.

A family friend of the couple, Bisola Olojede, said she escaped by a whisker.

Olojede explained that she had taken the couple to the maternity centre where Oyin had a scan and they were leaving the centre for a hospital in Ikeja when the robbers struck.

She said, “The incident happened around 10pm. The woman, who is my friend, was pregnant and her doctor recommended that she should do a scan. I was called to take them to a private maternity centre in Ibafo.

“From the maternity centre, we decided to go to a hospital in Ikeja. As her husband opened the vehicle doors with a remote, she entered and sat at the front, while I took my seat at the back. Her husband had just entered the SUV when a man suddenly appeared and started dragging the steering with him.

“I alighted from the car and called for help. I saw a man and I begged him to assist us, but he ignored me. I never knew he was among the robbers.”

Olojede said she moved away when she saw that the robbers were armed.

She said a few minutes later, they drove away with Oluwakunmi and his wife.

She explained that she ran after the vehicle and started calling for help, adding that some residents, including Kayode, joined her in chasing the vehicle.

When the robbers got to the front of the Ibafo Police Station, they were said to have stopped and fired into the crowd of pursuers.

Olojede said, “The bullet hit one of us and the man died immediately. The police heard the gunshot and rushed out. I started begging them to help us, saying there was a pregnant woman in critical condition in the vehicle. There were two of them, a man and a woman. But they shunned me.

“I called my husband on the telephone and told him what happened. He said I should call the police and I told him I was with them but they were not doing anything. When the police heard that, they quickly shut their gate.”

PUNCH Metro was told that when the Divisional Police Officer was contacted, he ordered the officers to attend to the case.

The policemen were said to have opened their gate and invited Olojede to make statements.

“Later, they asked if there was anybody that could identify the man that was shot dead and two men came forward and said he was a member of the OPC and his name was Kayode.

“They then put him in the same van they were supposed to use to chase the robbers, preparing him for the mortuary. They started asking me all kinds of irrelevant questions. They told their DPO on the telephone that they had attended to me,” she added.

Our correspondent gathered that the robbers dropped off the couple at the *Lotto* end of the expressway.

They were said to have shot Oluwakunmi in the eye region.

Oluwakunmi’s friend, Jejelaye Gbadamosi, said he had been admitted in an undisclosed hospital.

He said, “They dropped them around *Lotto*, and drove off in their jeep. It was a Good Samaritan that assisted them.

“My friend and his wife are in different hospitals. The bullet pierced him around the eye.

“We suspect that the robbers came out from a brothel close to the maternity area. The place is notorious. The police did not also do well. They didn’t respond until their DPO called them.”

A source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said despite witnessing the killing, the Ibafo Police Division did not send signals to surrounding stations.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Ogun State Command, Muiyiwa Adejobi, confirmed the death of the victim.

He, however, denied that the police fled and shut its gate against the residents.

He said, "We have a confirmation that somebody was shot dead around the police station and the police heard a woman calling for help; and she was attended to. Nobody shut any gate; it is not possible. The couple, who were abducted, were rescued in the Redemption Camp area, and they have regained their freedom. They are being treated in a clinic."

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