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METRO PLUS

Gunmen on motorcycle kill bartender in Lagos

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Afeez Hanafi

What was planned to be an exciting Yuletide celebration for a barman, Holland Ekpo, and his family of two children went awry after he was shot dead by some gunmen.

Ekpo and his wife, Nfoniso Ekpo, run a beer parlour in the Power Line area, near the Lagos State Polytechnic, Ikorodu.

PUNCH Metro learnt that Ekpo was in the midst of their customers outside the shop around 9pm on Sunday when three men on a motorcycle stormed the area.

One of the attackers, who sat in the back, was said to have shot him in the chest while the rider zoomed off immediately, leaving him in a pool of blood.

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The deceased's widow, Nfoniso, said her husband was engrossed in a discussion with one Clem when the gunmen struck.

"That evening, I was washing some plates that I wanted to use for our customers, who needed assorted meat. My husband was chatting with a customer called Clem when I suddenly heard a gunshot.

"Before I knew what was wrong, my husband had fallen to the ground. The gunmen were three, but I don't know them."

The widow lamented that the children missed Holland's usual outings for the family during Christmas, adding that his death was a big loss.

"My children have been asking whether they will see their father again. They knew what actually happened and it has been difficult to calm them down. They missed the special treatments their father used to give them during Christmas. We were indoors during the celebration," she added.

A shop owner near the couple's beer parlour said the incident had caused panic in the area as traders now closed early.

The trader, who did not want his name in print, said, "I know Holland (Ekpo) as a quiet person. I can't still imagine who he offended to have deserved this. It is very sad. We were together around 7.30pm that day. On getting home, somebody called me and said he had been killed. I didn't believe the person until I got to the shop the following day.

"Traditional rulers in Ikorodu need to help in fighting criminals, especially young boys that are into cultism. We are no longer safe."

The Police Public Relations Officer in Lagos, SP Dolapo Badmos, said the command had commenced investigation into the incident.

"It is suspected to be a case of cult killing. It is under investigation," she said.