

# Man dies in SARS custody, family demands justice

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Ondo State CP, Gbenga Adeyanju

**Peter Dada, Akure**

A family in Ondo State has called on the state Commissioner of Police, Mr. Gbenga Adeyanju, and the Inspector-General of Police, Mr. Ibrahim Idris, to investigate the death of their son, Seun Ayoade, who died in the custody of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad of the Ondo State Police Command.

Seun and his brother Abayomi, together with some other suspects, were allegedly arrested and detained by the men of SARS on October 17, 2017, at the Oke Aro area of Akure, the state capital, for alleged robbery.



Seun

A family source told *PUNCH Metro* that the deceased had had an issue with a SARS operative, adding that Seun was arrested for a vendetta.

He said the policemen accused Seun and Abayomi of belonging to a gang of armed robbers.

He said, “They (SARS operatives) told us that they arrested some members of an armed robbery gang, who informed them that Seun was their leader, and that was why they arrested him and his brother.”

The source said the policemen did not inform the family that Seun was dead, until a human rights organisation was involved in the case.

He noted that after the death of the victim, the SARS operatives deposited his corpse in a mortuary without informing the family.

Speaking with journalists in Akure, the stepfather of the deceased, Mr. Femi Ajilo, said Seun and his brother did not belong to a robbery gang.

He said after the arrest, he (Ajilo) went to the SARS’ office in Akure to know why Seun and his brother were arrested, adding that instead of explaining to him, some of the policemen beat him up, accusing him of being the father of robbers.

“Seun and Abayomi were with me in Igbara Odo, a day before they were arrested. When I was informed that they were arrested, I quickly rushed down to the SARS office to know what happened. The policemen I met were not civil at all; they pounced on me and beat me up.

“They said I was the father of armed robbers and that I wanted to secure the release of armed robbers. It was one of them that rescued me. I saw only Abayomi, but I was not permitted to talk to him; I did not see Seun.

“Nobody told us anything about the whereabouts of Seun. It was when we engaged a human rights lawyer that we discovered that Seun was dead in their custody. Up till now, we have not been told the cause of his death,” he added.

Demanding justice, Ajilo appealed to the government and the police authorities to unravel those behind the killing.

The Public Relations Officer of the Ondo State Police Command, Mr. Femi Joseph, said the command had begun investigation into the matter.

“It is still an allegation, but we will investigate it. We want to assure the family that nothing would be covered up,” Joseph said.