

Family of killed Ericsson engineer blames hospital, seeks justice

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Adebayo Akinwunmi

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The family of a slain engineer with Ericsson Nigeria, Adebayo Akinwunmi, who was shot dead by armed robbers, have asked the police to hunt down his killers.

The family also faulted a Lagos hospital, Reddington Hospital, Ikeja, for allegedly rejecting the victim due to lack of a police report.

Adebayo was killed on Sunday in Orimerunmu, Ofada-Mokoloki, in the Obafemi Owode Local Government Area of Ogun State.

PUNCH Metro had reported that the 41-year-old was attacked in his house around 1am.

The four-man gang was said to have scaled the fence into the house and broken the door.

They reportedly made away with Automated Teller Machine cards, laptops and phones, among other valuables.

Our correspondent reported that one of the robbers shot Adebayo in the rib without any provocation.

His wife, Nike, sought assistance of a relative, who conveyed him to a hospital.

After he was rejected in a private medical facility in the community, he was taken to Reddington Hospital, Ikeja, where his company reportedly had retainers.

The hospital allegedly rejected him due to lack of a police report and referred him to the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital, Ikeja.

He was confirmed dead at LASUTH where doctors were said to be on strike.

The Abeokuta, Ogun State indigene was reportedly buried on the same day in accordance with Islamic rites.

His elder brother, Tunde Akinwunmi, while urging the police to get the suspects arrested, said the victim could have been saved if he got medical attention on time.

He said, “My pain is really about the hospital that rejected him. The wife told me that Reddington was his company’s hospital and she insisted that we took him there that night. My pain is that we passed several hospitals to get to Reddington. When we got there, they did not even touch my brother. The wife was shouting and begging, but they said I should go and get a police report. I said the requirement had been cancelled by the government. I asked them to first stabilise him, then other things could come afterwards. But they said I should go to LASUTH, because the hospital handles such cases. Reddington was our only hope, but they disappointed us.

“We went to LASUTH, but unfortunately, the doctors were on strike. The surgical emergency was locked. The security men said they locked the patients inside because of the strike.

“When I got to medical emergency, they said the case was not for them because it was surgical. I begged them to attend to us. By the time a doctor came to check him, it was too late. He simply pronounced him dead.”

Tunde, who commended the Ogun State Police Command for promptly attending to the family after the incident, said the Mowe Divisional Police Officer and men of the Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad had been visiting the house.

He, however, urged the police to bring the killers to book, saying it would assuage the family’s pain.

The deceased’s brother said the death was a big blow to the family.

“In fact, the managing director of Ericsson Nigeria, its human resources manager and his line manager were present during his burial to show how much they valued him. But the sad thing for me is that I

have lost a brother who will never come back,” he said.

PUNCH Metro had called both the Victoria Island and Ikeja offices of Reddington Hospital to demand a reaction to the allegations on Sunday.

While an official of the hospital on the Victoria Island said a doctor’s report was a requirement for treatment of gunshot victims, the officials at Ikeja, where the victim was allegedly rejected, had promised to call back our correspondent.

Despite taking our correspondent’s telephone number, the hospital had yet to get back.

The Chairman of Ericsson Staff Union, Fisayo Akinbolusaye, described the death as “a rude shock”, saying Adebayo would be sorely missed.

In its reaction to the death of the engineer, the Lagos State Police Command frowned on the alleged rejection of Adebayo at Reddington Hospital, saying such contravened the Compulsory Treatment and Care of Victims of Gunshot Act, 2017.

The police spokesperson, Chike Oti, said if the allegation was true, the hospital was criminally liable.

He said, “The command considers the action of the hospital cruel; perhaps, an indication that the hospital management may be ignorant of the Compulsory Treatment and Care of Victims Of Gunshot Act, 2017.

“In the light of this development, the command wishes to inform all medical practitioners in Lagos State that the Act demands that every hospital in Nigeria, whether public or private, should accept for immediate and adequate treatment with or without a police clearance, any person with gunshot wounds. The Act, however, requires the hospital treating such a patient to report the fact to the nearest police station within two hours of commencement of treatment.

“The Commissioner of Police, Lagos State, CP Edgal Imohimi, saddened by the allegation against Reddington Hospital, has directed all Area Commanders and Divisional Police Officers in Lagos State to henceforth arrest and diligently prosecute any medical practitioner who rejects a gunshot victim on the grounds of lack of a police report.

“The CP wants doctors to note that the Act recommends a five-year jail term for any person, hospital or authority who stands by or omits to do his bit which results in the unnecessary death of any person with bullet wounds.”

Oti told our correspondent that the CP had instructed that Reddington Hospital, Ikeja, and the family of the deceased be invited for a meeting on the matter.

When our correspondent contacted Reddington Hospital, Ikeja, on Wednesday, he was asked to call back on Thursday morning.