

Soldiers torture 18-year-old to death over stolen phone

Published August 25, 2018



Amadu Atajan

Afeez Hanafi

The life of an 18-year-old secondary school-leaver, Amadu Atajan, has come to a tragic end after he was allegedly tortured by some soldiers attached to the Special Task Force, Sector 7, Sha District, in the Bokokos Local Government Area of Plateau State.

Atajan, who gave up the ghost on Wednesday, reportedly died from internal injuries he sustained in the hands of the soldiers.

READ ALSO: Youths burn police station in Osun over murdered undergraduate

Saturday PUNCH learnt that the victim was assaulted on the account of his friend who reported a case of a stolen phone to the men sometime last week.

It was gathered that Atajan had attended the friend's secondary school graduation in July during which he collected his Android phone to take pictures.

While the fun went on, another friend of the host was said to have collected the phone from Atajan under false pretences of using it to take pictures.

The friend allegedly left the event surreptitiously with the phone while efforts to locate him proved abortive.

Our correspondent learnt that Atajan pleaded with his friend to give him time so he could raise funds to buy another phone.

A native of the community, John Akans, who spoke to *Saturday PUNCH* on the telephone on Thursday, said Atajan's friend agreed to the plea, but made a U-turn last week and reported the case to the soldiers.

He stated that the soldiers took the 18-year-old to their base and beat him up until he went into a coma.

Akans, who posted the picture of the victim on Facebook while he was on a stretcher, said he was rushed to the general hospital in the neighbourhood.

[READ ALSO] 2019: APC, ADC release September dates for presidential, governorship primaries

He said, “About one month ago, his (Atajan’s) close friend invited him to his secondary school graduation. The friend gave him an Android phone which they used to take pictures. Somebody came and begged him to give him the phone so he could use it to snap. He innocently gave him the phone, but the boy disappeared with the phone. They looked for him within the school premises but could not locate him.

“The victim begged his friend that he gave the phone to the boy innocently. He begged the friend that his father would deal with him if he knew about the phone. He asked the friend to give him time to pay for the phone. They agreed on that arrangement.

“All of a sudden last week, the friend reported him to some soldiers at Sector 7 of the Special Task Force, who invited him. He told them that he never knew the boy would flee with the phone and that he had pleaded with his friend to give him time.”

Akans told our correspondent that Atajan’s explanation fell on deaf ears as the soldiers reportedly tied him up and beat him with iron rods.

“Before he died, he narrated how he was tortured. He said, the soldiers hanged him upside down and tied his hands to his back. They beat him with iron rods and sticks.

“He collapsed and was rushed to Bokkos General Hospital. He was revived at the hospital but after three days, his condition worsened. It was discovered that he had internal bleeding as a result of the torture. Unfortunately, he passed on on Wednesday. He was 18-year-old; he just finished secondary school.

“This matter must be treated seriously and urgently. Nigerians must not be killed by security agents who are supposed to protect them,” Akans, who is based in Jos, the state capital, added.

The deceased’s parents, who live in the remote community, could not be reached on the telephone for comments as of press time.

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE: [Presidency lied over bombing in Borno village, Osuntokun insists](#)

When contacted on the incident, the Director, Army Public Relations, Brig. Gen. Texas Chukwu, said he was on an official assignment in Borno State and directed our correspondent to the acting Director, Defence Information, Brig. Gen. John Agim.

A text message sent to Agim had yet to be responded to as of press time.