

METRO PLUS

Family mourns 16-year-old pupil's death on election day

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Celestine Oke

Oluwatobi Akindele

The family of a 16-year-old boy, Celestine Oke, has been thrown into mourning after he was killed by a stray bullet from the hoodlums' gun on the day of the presidential and National Assembly elections in the Iwaya area of Lagos.

PUNCH Metro gathered that Oke had gone out to buy sugar, which he wanted to use take *gari* on Saturday, February 23, 2018, when the 'Iwaya boys' allegedly invaded the Oke Agbon community.

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Oke's guardian, Trabo Ageh, said his body was brought to him by sympathisers, who found him dead.

The Lagos State indigene said, "On Saturday, around 6.30pm, I was at home when I heard screams. I was told that some hoodlums were fighting but I did not know what caused the fight. I was told that they were 'Iwaya boys' and I heard sound of gunshots. Oke was not at home at the time; he went to buy sugar with which to take *gari*.

"Suddenly, I heard a knock on my door and when I opened to find out who it was, I saw some sympathisers, who brought Oke home and informed me that he was killed by a stray bullet that was shot by the hoodlums.

"We took his body to the police station to inform the police and we demanded that the perpetrators be brought to justice."

Ageh, who is the younger brother of the deceased's father, said Oke started living with him when his father died, adding that he was a promising teenager with a bright future, who had a scholarship examination coming up soon.

One of the youth leaders in Oko Agbon, Raphael Salako, said despite the fact that the hoodlums were known to the police, the cops had not made any arrest in connection with the killing.

He stated, "After the election, we heard noise and we saw people running helter-skelter. I tried to find out what the matter was and someone told me that the 'Iwaya boys' were around. Immediately, I called the Divisional Police Officer of the Sabo Police Station. He told me that he was in Ikorodu and directed me to call someone else, but the person also told me that he was not around.

area. C... I waited briefly to restore peace but as soon as it left, the hoodlums resumed fighting.

“The hoodlums had previously fired some shots before the police operatives came around, but it was after the operatives left that the hoodlums killed the boy. They also butchered a man, Emmanuel Wonfo, who was coming from somewhere and did not know that there was a fight going on. He is still battling for his life at the Lagos University Teaching Hospital, Idi Araba.

“No arrest has been made in connection with the issue despite the fact that these hoodlums are known to the police; their leader is a known person. They (hoodlums) have been coming to the area after they threatened each other. Whenever they come, they use the opportunity to steal from the people; they steal money from traders and motorcyclists, and also collect their phones.

“What the police always try to do is to maintain peace in the territories. In our own area, we usually apprehend troublemakers and hand them over to the police; eventually, they are released so soon to wreck more havoc. One of the guys arrested recently ran away with his hands cuffed.

“They had been coming to the area before. There are boys from our area too. We can’t explain why they fight. They sometimes threaten each other. And when they come to fight, innocent people are the ones who pay for it.”

When the state Police Public Relations Officer, Chike Oti, was contacted, he said the command was on the trail of the hoodlum, who shot Oke dead.

He said, “There was a free-for-all by some cult members, who engaged themselves in a supremacy battle. In the process, a shot from one of them hit the young boy. However, we have been able to recognise the person responsible for the shooting and the command is on his trail.

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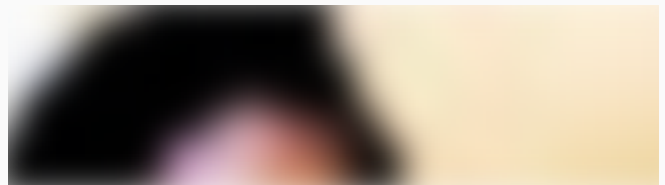
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