

Vigilante allegedly shoots Ogun resident dead at night

Published [March 26, 2019](#)

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The late Lekan Akinde

Deji Lambo

The family of the late Lekan Akinde has been thrown into mourning after he was allegedly shot dead by a vigilante, identified simply as Solomon.

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The incident happened during a vigilante duty at night around the Idiope area, along Sojuolu Road in the Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun State.

PUNCH Metro gathered that Solomon and one Abiodun, whose house is beside the deceased's, had called Lekan out on Friday, March 1, 2019, for a meeting around midnight, but he was allegedly shot in the chest by Solomon.

Lekan's wife, Morenikeji, while calling for justice for her late husband, said her husband died around 3am on Saturday while medical workers were battling to save him at the Ifo General Hospital.

Morenikeji said the tragedy would have been averted if her husband, who was a tipper driver, had listened to her and not forced his way out of the house when Solomon and Abiodun called him for the meeting.

She stated that because Solomon had allegedly locked her inside the house to prevent her from stopping Lekan from attending the meeting, she had to jump through the window to look for her husband when she suddenly heard him calling her name for help because the vigilante had allegedly shot him.

The 35-year-old said, "Abiodun repeatedly called my husband's mobile line to tell him to come out for the meeting at Solomon's house around 11pm and I told him that it was too late to go out.

“Suddenly, someone started knocking on our door, and when I asked who it was, the person identified himself as Solomon. He said they were waiting for my husband before starting the meeting and I queried what kind of meeting they planned for such an odd time.

“I held my husband in order to prevent him from leaving the house, but he wriggled free; and with the help of Solomon that was at the entrance, I was prevented from pulling him back. Solomon used the padlock on the door to lock me inside the house afterwards.

“Thirty minutes after they had left for the meeting, I heard my husband screaming for help; he was shouting my name and saying that Solomon had shot him. The door had been padlocked from outside, but when I peeped through the window, I saw blood all over him. I had to jump through the window to get outside, and as I ran towards him, I was shouting for help.

“With the help of residents who came out to assist me, we were able to rush him to the Ifo General Hospital, where he died around 3am.

“My husband was the only child of his parents; if he had listened to me and not attend the meeting, Solomon wouldn’t have killed him.

“The police arrested both Abiodun and Solomon, but Abiodun was released and I don’t know why. I really want justice for my husband’s death.”

PUNCH Metro learnt that the meeting that led to Lekan’s death was meant to be a vigilante duty that he had promised to participate in so as to complement Abiodun, who had also sought Solomon’s help in capturing some suspected thieves, whom he said had been invading his premises to rob him.

Lekan’s uncle, Mr. Samuel Akinola, said immediately after Solomon had allegedly shot the deceased, he ran to the Ifo Police Station to report the matter, following which Solomon was detained.

He stated that Abiodun, who was also arrested by the police, was released when the case was transferred to the Ogun State Police Command headquarters in Eleweran, Abeokuta.

Akinola said, “From what I gathered, Abiodun complained that thieves were threatening him in his house and that he was looking for people to assist him in keeping watch over the area at night so as to capture the thieves.

“After arranging with Solomon, who claimed to be a hunter, he also sought the help of Lekan because they lived together in the same area.

“So, after perfecting their plan, Lekan went home to eat around 11pm, but when it was time to leave for the duty, it became an issue between him and his wife, and through the assistance of Solomon, he left.

“A few minutes after they left, Solomon shot Lekan, and he (Solomon) went to the Ifo Police Station to report what had happened.

“I went to the Ifo Police Station where I and Lekan’s wife wrote a statement and later the case was transferred to Eleweran in Abeokuta, where Solomon was detained and Abiodun was released. I don’t know why Abiodun was released.”

A resident of the community, who identified himself as Olawale, condemned the Police for releasing Abiodun, alleging that he connived with Solomon to kill the tipper driver.

Abiodun, when contacted, said he had nothing to say because the information regarding the case was with the Police.

“I have nothing to say; the information you need is at the Police command in Eleweran.”

When contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Abimbola Oyeyemi, said the principal suspect had been arrested and the case had been transferred to the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department for further investigation.

Oyeyemi said, “We don’t base our investigation on speculation, especially in a case of murder, which is a capital offence.

“The case is under investigation and the principal suspect has been arrested. The case has been transferred to the Homicide Section, SCIID, for further investigation.”