

Drunken policemen shoot comedian dead in Ogun

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Abiola Owonikoko

Deji Lambo

Two yet-to-be-identified policemen attached to the Nigerian Prison Yard in Oba, Ogun State, have allegedly shot dead a comedian, Abiola Owonikoko, in the Abeokuta area of the state.

The policemen were said to have abandoned their duty post to attend an end of the year party organised by a group of miners in the area.

They reportedly got themselves drunk and started misbehaving.

The policemen allegedly harassed and threatened to kill some of the guests, who were having a good time at the party.

PUNCH Metro gathered that the cops started shooting all of a sudden and stray bullets hit Owonikoko in the chest and stomach, but efforts to revive him proved abortive as the comedian died due to the injuries he sustained from the attack.

Annoyed by the development, Owonikoko's colleague, Olawale Yusuf, explained on his *Instagram* handle, *@baba_olorunosebi_comedy_klinick*, the circumstances surrounding the comedian's death, adding that the errant policemen were drunk when they perpetrated the crime.

He demanded justice for Owonikoko's death.

Yusuf wrote, *"They are attached to the mobile police officer with the Nigeria Prison Yard, Oba, here in Abeokuta. Dredgers are doing their end of the year party, so two officers sneaked out and came to the party as well. They got drunk and started threatening people that they will kill them. So, they started shooting and unfortunately, the bullets hit my colleague in the chest and stomach. RIP bro, missing you already, we want justice. The boy is a comedian as well."*

A picture attached to the post showed Owonikoko's remains lying on the floor, with the parts where the bullets pierced his body clearly marked out.

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Nigerians, who reacted to the incident on *Instablog9ja*, condemned the action of the policemen and called for a probe into the events that led to Owonikoko's death so that the errant cops could be prosecuted.

An *Instagram* user with the handle, *@jspenceofficial*, alleged that policemen were fond of killing innocent people instead of protecting them when she wrote, *"The*

people who suppose protect us, na dem who go kill us sef... God protect us oo kaaa.”

Another user, *@ifedolapoh*, while expressing shock over the news wrote, *“Nigeria has no government at all. This is shameful. How can law enforcement officials kill innocent people and no one is bothered?”*

Another Instagram user, *@jspenceofficial*, while condemning the incident, urged the police authorities to order the use of plastic bullets or pepper spray when police personnel engage unarmed civilians to prevent such incidents from happening.

He wrote, *“Until stray bullet kills the Inspector General of Police, then the Police Service Commission or Ministry of Police Affairs will decide on giving policemen either plastic bullets or just pepper spray as tools for guarding. No matter the gravity of crime, Indian police don’t use a gun but sticks. Only special forces are seen with guns, but Nigeria police will never learn from all the past mistakes from power-drunk officers.”*

@derek_koko, while also reacting to Owonikoko’s death said the errant policemen should be jailed.

He wrote, *“They killed an innocent person through illicit drink; they should bag years in jail.”*

But *@Odinny* urged the police authorities to subject the policemen to training to re-orientate them on how to behave during operations across the country.

He posted, *“The decay in the Nigeria Police Force gets worse each day. The so-called police reform is a sham. These semi-illiterates they employed all need psychiatric evaluation and reorientation.”*

When contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Abimbola Oyeyemi, confirmed the incident and said one of the policemen had been arrested.

He added that the command had launched a manhunt for the other cop, who went into hiding after the incident.

Oyeyemi stated, “The incident is true; the policemen were at the scene of the incident on an illegal duty. They were posted to guard the prison in that area, so they left the place to carry out an illegal duty. No one sent them to that place to commit that atrocity.

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“As soon as the atrocity was committed, one of them ran away. They were two, who were posted to that place; we have one in our custody and we are using him to investigate and get the other policeman, who is at large.

“He can only run, but he cannot hide; there is no way he will not be brought to justice. The corpse of the victim has been deposited in the mortuary, while the command is investigating the incident. We are assuring members of the public that such a heinous crime will never be covered and the perpetrator is definitely going to be apprehended, no matter how long.

“Once we arrest him, we will make it known to members of the public and he is going to be prosecuted accordingly.”

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