

Police shoot dead cobbler, apprentice in Lagos

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The families of a cobbler, Kabiru Azeez, and an apprentice in a tailoring shop, Femi Orojo, have been thrown into mourning after policemen attached to the Pedro Police Station shot them dead.

PUNCH Metro learnt that 30-year-old Kabiru was shot in front of his shop on Bolaji Omupo Street, while 20-year-old Orojo was killed on the same street while returning from where he went to buy food.

The two victims were killed on Thursday, October 22, 2020, in the wake of the violence that trailed the *#EndSARS* protests.

Our correspondent gathered from witnesses that around 11am, some hoodlums from the Onipanu area mobilised in a vehicle and attempted to attack Pedro Police Station.

The policemen were said to have repelled the boys, some of whom fled into Bolaji Omupo Street.

The cops reportedly stood at the entrance into the street and opened fire on residents.

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In the process, Kabiru and Femi were hit by bullets.

Femi's 15-year-old brother, who was with him on the day, told *PUNCH Metro* that they had gone to buy food.

He stated, "As we were bringing the food back, policemen from Pedro turned us back from the road, and said we should take another place. They cordoned off the road.

"As we were going, we saw some boys, who wanted to attack the station. We also saw the policemen advancing towards them. We quickly ran into the street. The policemen also entered the street. They started shooting. A bullet hit my brother in the back as he ran, and it came out in the front."

Photos of the bloodied corpse obtained by *PUNCH Metro* revealed a big hole in the victim's neck, where the bullet came out from.

The man who took the corpse to a mortuary, Arinze, lamented that the police never cared after killing the victim.

"It took more than one hour before we got to the place where the boy's body was. We understood that some boys wanted to attack the station, but at the point the police started shooting, those hoodlums had left, because they saw that the police were heavily armed. But the policemen kept shooting until they killed the innocent boy. He fell into the gutter with the food flask in his hand," he added.

Our correspondent learnt that Femi died exactly one year and six months after he came to Lagos from his hometown in Ekiti State to learn tailoring.

His uncle, Tosin Iyioba, said the cloth he was sewing before going out to buy the food was still in the shop.

The cobbler's mother, Tawa, said she had handed over the policemen to God.

The octogenarian, whose leg had been amputated, lamented that Kabiru had been the one taking care of her before he was killed.

She stated, "On the morning of the incident, I saw him and his brothers and asked them not to go out and he agreed.

"I was inside my room when I started to hear gunshots and I was told that a boy (Femi) had been killed. I asked about Kabiru, and they said he was inside his shop, which is opposite our house. I was told he was asleep.

"He (Kabiru) also heard the gunshots and stepped out of his shop and was hit. I cannot believe that the boy taking care of me in my old age is gone. I have accepted my fate. But I also know the person who did this will be punished, because my son did not commit any crime.

"If he had gone out, I would have said he brought this on himself. But he was killed in front of his shop. I have been told that my tears and cries cannot give him justice, so I hand over the killers to God."

The victim's younger brother, Musa, said Kabiru was shot around noon.

He noted that Kabiru was treated at the Somolu General Hospital, Oguntolu; National Orthopaedic Hospital, Igbobi; and the Lagos University Teaching Hospital, Idi-Araba, before he died around 6pm due to excessive loss of blood.

Musa said when he returned to the Pedro Police Station to report the killing, the cops after making different excuses, arrested a sachet water seller, whom they claimed threatened the deceased a day to the incident.

He stated, “The policemen said they heard that my brother fought with a sachet water seller the day before and the guy threatened to kill him. They arrested the guy that day. But when they had no evidence against him, they released him. They tried all means to deflect the blame for the shooting.

“One of the policemen, S. O. Jegede, later told me that even if the police were shooting, what was Kabiru doing outside. He said that meant that my brother wanted to see what did not concern him. I was shocked that a policeman could say that.”

The state Police Public Relations Officer, Muyiwa Adejobi, promised to react after speaking with the division concerned.

He had yet to do so as of the time of filing this report. ,