

SARS withholding corpse of my brother since 2016 – Woman

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Ade Adesomoju, Abuja

A woman, Mrs Doris Idedia, on Wednesday said his brother, Felix Idehen, died in the custody of the defunct Special Anti-Robbery Squad in September 2016.

She added that the disbanded unit had since then held on to the corpse despite repeated demands by the family.

Idedia testified before the Independent Investigative Panel set up by the National Human Rights Commission to probe into human rights abuses perpetrated by SARS and other police tactical units.

She told the panel sitting in Abuja that Idehen was at her place in Kaduna on September 3, 2016, when around 5pm he received a call from his wife's younger brother, identified as Onyekachi Sunday, to pick him up at a place.

She said when Idehen got to the area, he saw a Volkswagen Golf driving towards his direction.

According to her, her brother took car occupants for kidnappers and drove away from the location.

She said as Idehen drove away, the car behind sped up, adding that at a point the victim tried to escape by foot.

“Throughout that day, a Saturday, we did not see him again. My mother said we should wait till Sunday to report to the police station,” said.

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She said the family was waiting to hear from her brother when his wife received a call from an unknown caller who said her brother was at a hospital.

According to her, they saw him at the hospital with multiple injuries.

She said Idehen told the family that one Inspector Kingsley, who was in the Volkswagen Golf, called him a thief and mobilised people around to apprehend him.

Idedia said, “He said Kingsley accused him of stealing the car he was using. My brother said he did not steal the car but bought it from Onyekachi (his brother-in-law).”

She said when Kingsley later arrived at the hospital, he insisted that he was taking Idehen to Abuja for further investigation.

She added that they did not hear from Kingsley until September 6, 2016, when he informed the family that Felix had died.

The petitioner said the family demanded her brother's corpse but Kingsley refused to release it.

"He refused to release the corpse to us, saying that if he released the corpse, we would go and make a case," she said.

She said the family had reported the matter to various police authorities, including the Inspector-General of Police, as well as the Senate President, with no positive outcome.

She asked the panel to award N200m compensation in favour of the family.

Counsel for the respondents, Godwin Ijioma, told the panel that he needed to contact the accused Inspector Kingsley, and other police authorities joined as respondents in the case.

The Justice Suleiman Galadima (retd.)-led panel then adjourned till December 15 for cross examination of the petitioner.