

Angry deceased man's relatives attack policeman at panel

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Inspector General of Police Adamu Mohammed

Friday Olokor, Abuja

There was pandemonium on Thursday at the Independent Investigative Panel on Human Rights Violations by operatives of the disbanded Special Anti-Robbery Squad and other police units as relations of a deceased victim raised objections to the testimonies of ASP Kingsley Ojeomokhai.

The enraged family members said the police officer was telling lies against their late brother, Festus Idehen, while he was giving his evidence on the circumstances that led to his death in 2016.

A statement by the Head of Media, NHRC, Hajiya Fatima Agwai Mohammed, said they called him names and rained curses on him, saying, “You will see.”

Ojeomokhai, in his testimony before the panel, claimed that late Festus had tried to incite a mob against him after labelling him an armed robber before he identified himself as a policeman.

The policeman also alleged that the mob that the man wanted to use against him later confronted Festus when they learnt that he was a crime suspect.

The testimonies of the ASP led to the emotional outbursts by the deceased’s relations, who called him a liar.

Ojeomokhai explained that on August 28, 2016, he was assigned with four other officers to investigate a case of criminal conspiracy and armed robbery involving two suspects, Lawal Mohammed and Abubakar Mohammed.

The policemen claimed that Lawal in his statement said they sold a stolen Mercedes 350 to one Onyeka in Kafanchan, who is an in-law to Festus.

Led by Umoh Inah, counsel for the police, the ASP alleged that on September 3, 2016, Lawal, a police team, including himself, moved to Onyeka’s house to arrest him.

He said Onyeka admitted to selling the said car to Festus, adding that the police team directed him to call Festus and under the pretext of having a laptop for sale and that Festus agreed to meet him at Gonin Gora, a suburb of Kaduna.

Ojeomokhai said, “Festus came to Gonin Gora in the stolen Mercedes and when he sighted us, he raised the alarm and called us armed robbers.”

He said a mob gathered to attack the team and after identifying himself and informing the mob that Festus was using a stolen vehicle, the mob went after Festus.

At the end of hearing, Justice Suleiman Galadima (retd) directed the respondents’ counsel to make available the hospital admission and treatment records of both the police clinic and the Asokoro General Hospital at the next adjourned date.

Further hearing was adjourned till April 7, 2021.

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