

Controversy surrounds apprentice's death in custody over businessman's missing N14m goods

Deji Lambo 24 March 2021

Kindly share this story: [f](#) [t](#) [@](#) [in](#)



Trade fair area

An apprentice, Chinemremu Ogbu, has died in the custody of policemen attached to the Trade Fair Division of the Lagos State Police Command.

However, controversy is surrounding the circumstances of the 23-year-old's death on Saturday.

While family members and other traders alleged that Ogbu was tortured to death for stealing goods worth millions of naira from his boss' shop at the Trade Fair Market, the police insisted that he committed suicide in the cell.

READ ALSO: [Police order probe as scores declared missing in Cross River, Akwa Ibom clashes](#)

PUNCH Metro gathered that trouble started between Ogbu and his boss, Fidelis Eduka, when the latter conducted an audit of the goods in his shop and reportedly discovered that goods worth N14m had been stolen.

In a bid to recover the stolen goods, Eduka was said to have lodged a complaint against Ogbu at the Trade Fair Police Division, where policemen were mobilised to arrest him.

The case, however, took another dimension when Ogbu's remains were recovered in a cell, where he was being detained.

A businessman, Chucks Goodluck, told *PUNCH Metro* that when the news of Ogbu's death became public knowledge, traders in the market mobilised to Eduka's shop and out of annoyance burnt his goods.

Goodluck explained that Ogbu, who had been serving Eduka for years, was about to complete his apprenticeship when the boss accused him of stealing his goods, adding that a lot of people had been using similar scenarios to renege on agreements to settle their apprentices after serving them.

He said, "The boy (Ogbu) had a few months to complete his apprenticeship after which his boss would settle him, but the suspicion was that the man started coming up with different stories to prevent him from fulfilling that obligation of settling him after his service by accusing him of stealing goods worth millions of naira from his shop.

"So, he involved the police, who took Ogbu into custody and when the boy died, traders, who were aware of the case, angrily stormed Eduka's shop and burnt all his goods. The stealing of the goods was just an allegation against the victim by his boss that should not have warranted the involvement of the police as that is one of the tactics people like that use to prevent them from fulfilling their obligations to their apprentices."

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE: [NDLEA seizes UK, Australia-bound cocaine, heroin in courier firms](#)

However, another narrative had it that Ogbu committed suicide while in police custody.

It was learnt that a policeman working on night shift allegedly discovered Ogbu's dangling body in the cell after he reportedly hung himself with his clothe.

After he was brought down, it was learnt that Ogbu was rushed to the Navy Hospital, where a doctor on duty pronounced him dead. His corpse was said to have been deposited in the hospital's morgue.

When contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer, CSP Muyiwa Adejobi, said the allegation that the police tortured the suspect was not true, adding that the command was not aware that the complainant beat the deceased before the matter was reported to the Trade Fair Police Station.

He stated, "We had a report of the case and had the suspect in our custody for a case of stealing of goods worth millions of naira before the suspect, who was the only one in the cell, committed suicide in the cell on Saturday, March 20, 2021, around 10.30pm. The police did not torture him, because there was no basis for that.

READ ALSO: [Ogun community accuses railway contractor of destroying roads](#)

"He didn't deny the allegation. He hung himself with his clothe in the cell. The state Commissioner of Police, Hakeem Odumosu, has ordered the Homicide Section of the State Criminal Investigation and

Intelligence Department to take over the case for investigation. The allegation of beating or torture by the police is not true and is a mere speculation.”

Copyright PUNCH.

All rights reserved. This material, and other digital content on this website, may not be reproduced, published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in whole or in part without prior express written permission from PUNCH.

Contact: theeditor@punchng.com

Tags: **APPRENTICE** **BUSINESSMAN** **MISSING GOODS** **POLICE CUSTODY**

Kindly share this story:

Download PUNCH NEWS app:



Recommended Stories



Ezekwesili begins online campaign for Buhari’s medical test



US: Videos showing Asian Americans being attacked...

France 24



Apply Now! Canada Welcomes Over 300,000 New...

Become A Canadian



The Cost of Real Estate in Miami Might Surprise You

Real Estate Miami | Spo...

Recommended by

Search ...

- News

Sports

Metro Plus

Politics

Featured

Latest News

Business

Business & Economy

Opinion

Entertainment

Auto Famous

Auto Punch

Barka Da Sallah

Barriers Breaker

Breaking News

Brexit

Cartoon

Columns

Corona

Anti-corruption

Biafra

Boko Haram
- Case Review

Court News

Court Trivia

Campus Champion

Celebrity

City round

Interview

Panorama

Crossfire

Opinion

Octogenarian

Special Features

Spice

Technology

Famous Parent

Education

Cartoon

Columns

Corona

Campus Champion

Subscribe

About us

Advertise with us

Contact

punchng.com © 1971-2021 The Punch newspaper

Social media:

