

Police begin investigation, detain late Neighbourhood Watch official's colleague

Janet Ogundepo 11 July 2021

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The Office of the Assistant Inspector-General of Police, Force Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department, Alagbon annex, Lagos, has begun investigation into circumstances surrounding the death of an official of the Lagos Neighbourhood Security Corps, Taiye Bankole, who died on the corps' premises on May 4, 2021.

Sunday PUNCH learnt that one of Taiye's colleagues identified only as Tope had been arrested by the police for interrogation.

Our correspondent had reported that Taiye slumped on the LNSC premises at the Ojodu Local Council Development Area, Oke Ira, Ogba, around 11pm that day but his corpse was reportedly discovered around 7am the next day. The late Taiye was said to be on duty that day with colleagues identified only as Peace and Tope.

The family suspected foul play and petitioned the police when they saw the deceased's pictures taken by his colleagues. The pictures showed Taiye was on the ground in his uniform, without shoes while his belt was loose.

It was gathered that the investigation commenced on Tuesday, July 6, as the police invited Taiye's colleagues who came along with their lawyer. The deceased's uncle, Mr Samuel Bankole, represented the family.

Bankole told our correspondent that the colleagues, Peace and Tope, were questioned on their relationship with the late Taiye.

He said, "We met with a senior officer at Alagbon. I was told that the LNSC had reported to the station the previous week and a statement was taken from Tope and Peace. They came with a lawyer and were released on bail.

“The officer read out the petition we wrote and asked that Peace and Tope be identified. The officer then asked both of them their relationship with the late Taiye to which they both responded that they were his colleagues.”

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However, Peace denied being on duty on May 4, contrary to the information given by the late Taiye’s fiancée.

Bankole said, “When Peace and Tope were asked if they were both on duty that day, Tope responded that he was on duty while Peace denied being on duty. This is however contrary to what the fiancée of the late Taiye said and I confronted her about it but I was asked to sit down.”

Meanwhile, Tope who reportedly admitted to have seen the late Taiye around 11pm was detained for further questioning while Peace was allowed to go.

The Public Relations Officer, Force Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department, Alagbon Annex, Lagos, Mr Niyi Ogundeyi, confirmed to Sunday PUNCH that one of the suspects had been detained, adding that investigation was ongoing.

He said, “The update I have on that matter is that the case is under investigation. One of the suspects was detained on Tuesday. From the statement taken from the suspects, the man (late Taiye) had a protracted illness but the mistake the uncle made was not to have taken the corpse to the hospital (for autopsy) when he died. But investigation is ongoing.”