



Why I prefer Sharia court for trial of policeman who killed my son – Bauchi man

Two vigilantes were stabbed to death by a policeman during a joint night patrol by policemen and vigilantes in Bauchi State. Auwal Mohammed, who is father of one of the deceased vigilantes, and Nazif Mohammed, a vigilante who survived the knife attack, tell ARMSTRONG BAKAM about the incident

PLEASE introduce yourself.

My name is Auwal Mohammed. I am the father of Abdulmalik Mohammed, who was stabbed by a policeman which led to his death.

I am the Commander of Peace and Security Committee popularly called "Yan komiti" for the Sabon Gida Unit, Bauchi and I am also the Provost at the Ward Office of the Committee. The DPO (Divisional Police Officer) usually calls me to tell me he needs assistance, for me to send him some of my boys, sometimes two or up to five and I will send them to him to join them in patrol.

How did you get the news of your son's death?

I was in my house sleeping when the DPO of Yelwa Division called me and asked me to come and meet him in his office but before I could go there, he told me that a team comprising of his men and vigilantes went on patrol but it (the patrol) went bad. He told me that the team met someone at a lodge in the Rafin Zurfi area of the state. That place is known as a black spot, where criminals operate. He said the man they met there attacked them with a knife, stabbing three of the team members, who had to be rushed to the hospital. On his directive, I was taken in a car to the hospital.

I met three vigilantes, who were my son's colleagues, outside the hospital and I asked them where my son and the other two stabbed vigilantes were. They told me to go inside the hospital. The time was around 9.30pm to 10pm. When I got inside the hospital, I saw the two other vigilantes being treated. He was stabbed in the neck. But unfortunately, it was the corpses of my son, Abdulmalik, and the second vigilante, Sadiq, that I found.

Did the police explain to you what transpired before your son and the other vigilantes were stabbed by the suspect?

I was told that when the team of policemen and vigilantes got to the lodge, they met the suspect sitting down by the gate. The vigilantes were six in number. They flashed torchlight on his face and asked him, "Who are you?" He didn't answer them but instead queried why they were flashing light on his face. Immediately, he stood up and brought out a knife and began to stab them. In fact, he stabbed the second person that died twice and thank God that the third boy saw the knife in his hand as he approached him and that was

why his case wasn't so bad. That was the account they gave me and that was what was also written in the DPO's report.

Have the police been able to arrest the suspect?

He has been arrested and in fact, the police PRO confirmed that the suspect is a serving policeman. We were invited to the police headquarters some days ago to make statements. The Commissioner of Police assured us that they would do all they can to discipline him (the suspect); he said they would dismiss him from the Force and they would file charges against him in court. It is not that we doubt them; we know that is the way they deal with erring personnel, in accordance with the laws of the land. However, my plea is that the police should pay compensation for the lives of these young men wasted just like that. And also, I will prefer that this policeman be tried before a Sharia court, so that we can get justice; and anytime he will be appearing in court, they should invite us to be present because we are directly affected. Once they

take him before a Sharia court, we will get justice. But if they don't take him to court, we will go ahead and do it on our own. At the expiration of the short time we gave them, we will go ahead and take the matter to court, if they don't do it, so we can get justice for our children.

He was 22 years old. He also worked as a welder. He finished secondary school and obtained a diploma from the Abubakar Tafari Ali Polytechnic, Bauchi before obtaining HND from the same school.

Why was he working as a welder, despite being an HND holder?

When he finished school, I sought favour from our people in the Nigeria Customs Service to help him get employment during recruitment. He went for the assessment test at Misau and his name came out as one of the successful candidates. After screening, his name was also shortlisted and the list was sent to Abuja. He had already got the Customs job; all that was left was for him to go for training but then, God brought this test on us. This thing (his death) happened when we were waiting for him to be called up for training. The first batch of the

successful candidates had gone for training and should finish soon; we were hoping that his name would be in the second batch. I was hoping he would help me in training his younger siblings. I have 19 children and he was the firstborn. I will really miss him.

How much compensation are you demanding from the police?

I don't know how much the Sharia law stipulated to be paid as compensation for life. But I am sure that Islamic clerics will tell us if we consult them. If you kill or take the life of another person intentionally, after you have fasted, you must also pay compensation and as God would have it the policeman who committed the act is a Muslim, so the police must pay that compensation.

Have you made a formal demand from the police?

I told the Commissioner of Police when he came to commiserate with us and I am still insisting that that the police must pay compensation for those two children. I will not stop demanding that to be done by the police. I am calling on them to do that as soon as possible, else, we'll take action and go to court to seek justice.

Imagine if it was a policeman that was killed, the police authorities would definitely have done something. But up till this moment,

they haven't said anything to us and they haven't called us on that. They are supposed to call us and at least, give a token to the families of these children that were killed but there has been nothing.



How I escaped being stabbed to death like my colleagues – Vigilante

What is your name?

My name is Nazif Mohammed.

Can you tell us what happened that led to the death of two of your colleagues?

That night, we went on patrol with policemen from the Yelwa Division; we were six vigilantes, while the policemen were five in number. We went to Ungwa Ngas area and arrested four people



and took them to the station. One of us, the vigilantes, suggested that we go to the Benco Hotel area. We went and entered a house called Humiz Lodge where we found people outside; so we went inside and found someone sitting down with his two hands covering his face. As we approached him, one of us flashed torchlight on his face and he stood up and one of us went towards him but when he got to him, the man stabbed him with a knife but he (the vigilante) didn't shout. The second person also went close to him, he was also stabbed and when I saw that they hadn't come out, I also went inside but when I saw what was happening, I backed off into a corner and he came after me. I pushed him and my stick fell down. As I bent down to pick up my stick, he stabbed me on my neck and I shouted and told the others to go back. One of the guys that died came out by himself after he was stabbed while the other person died on the spot. Other colleagues went in and brought him out into the vehicle. We were rushed to the hospital and as soon as we got there, they told us that the two others had died. I was the only one that survived.

We later got to know that the man who stabbed us

was a policeman. The police arrested and took him to the Yelwa Division and early the next day, they moved him to the area command. He was later moved to the State CID at the Police Headquarters.

Didn't the policeman dress in the police uniform?

He didn't wear his uniform and he had no gun on him. We only saw him sitting down and covering his face with his hands.

Could he have been drunk?

We asked if he was drunk, he said he wasn't.

What do you want the police authorities to do to that policeman?

The police said they would prosecute him; they also said that all the money I spent on my treatment, they will refund to me. I took the receipt of the hospital bill to them, but I haven't heard anything from them. They only told me that the case had been transferred from the Yelwa Division to the Command Headquarters. I've exhausted all the money I have, treating myself and buying drugs. As I speak with you, I've not taken drugs for two days and the ones I had before have finished, I haven't got money to buy additional drugs.