

# interview

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## Soldier killed my DSS brother for defending motorcyclist – Ekiti man

**What do you do for a living?**  
My name is Olutope Olubode. I deal in furniture. I am 37 years old. I am based in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State.

**What is your relationship with the man who was allegedly killed by a soldier in Ado-Ekiti?**

He was my younger brother. He was 34 years old when he died. His name is Oluseye Olubode. He was an officer with the Department of State Services in Ekiti State till his death.

**From what you know, what really transpired between your brother and the soldier that led to your brother's death?**

Honestly, it is frustrating whenever I have to recount it because it happened so fast. It happened on June 4, 2021. He called me on that day and said we should try to see each other the next day. That call from him came around 7pm, because we were planning to attend the burial of a relative. So, I was shocked when I was called around 11pm of that day by a relative that he was dead. I didn't understand what I heard. How was that even possible? I got to know that there was a guesthouse he used to go to and pray in Ado-Ekiti. He joined a motorcycle rider who usually picked him up and dropped him at home every day. We got to know that the motorcyclist had an encounter with some newly-recruited soldiers and had to call my brother, who rushed down there to see what was going on.

**How did your brother approach the soldiers?**

People who witnessed the incident said my brother walked up to the soldiers, introduced himself as an officer too, and begged them to forgive the motorcyclist for his sake. In the process of the peace talk, an argument ensued and there was a little fight. I don't know what transpired but people who witnessed it said the soldier stabbed Oluseye in his neck and he fell and was bleeding. The soldier, who was accompanied by another man, who people also identified as a soldier, ran off on a motorcycle. They said my brother died on his way to the hospital and that he kept shouting, 'I am tired. I am tired' as they moved to the hospital. It was very sad.

**Who called to inform you of his death?**

I was called by my other brother who informed me that Oluseye had died. He was called by one of the persons who helped to take my brother to the hospital.

**Have his remains been buried?**

Yes, he has been buried. An autopsy was carried out by the DSS and we were told to go and bury our brother and we did. Since then, we have been battling with pain and grief. A day does not pass without me thinking about him. He was a really loyal man to me. He was my best friend.

**Apart from the autopsy, what else did the DSS do? Was there an investigation into his murder?**

*A 34-year-old officer of the Department of State Services, Oluseye Olubode, was allegedly stabbed to death by a soldier in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State, on June 4, 2021. His sibling, Olutope, shares with GODFREY GEORGE the family's pain and cry for justice 17 months after*

I don't know. I cannot say if what they did was the best they could have done or the best for us. What has happened has happened. The deed has been done. No amount of money given to the family now can reverse the case. The person we are talking about is my immediate younger brother. He was a man I really loved so much. When I say 'love', I mean real love.

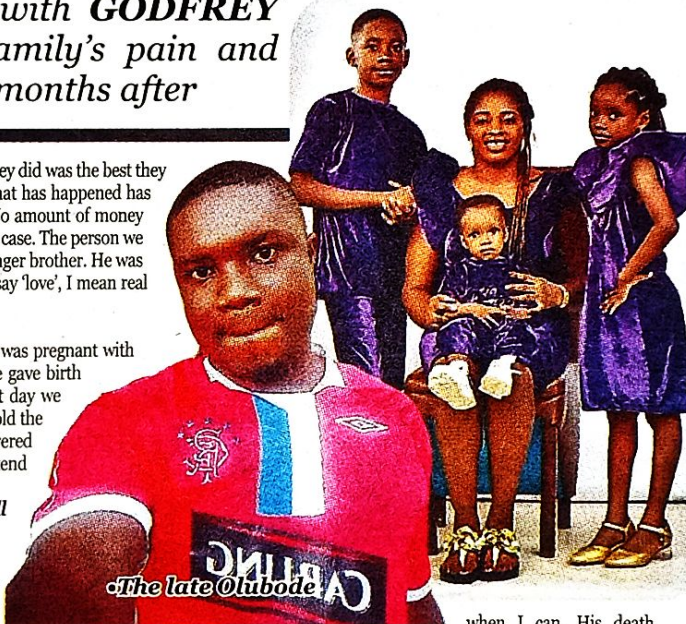
**What about his wife and kids?**

He had three kids. In fact, the wife was pregnant with the third child when he died. The wife gave birth two weeks after his death on the exact day we had planned to bury him. We had to hold the burial two days after the wife was delivered of the baby so she would be able to attend the funeral.

**How is your family taking all of this?**

It is a terrible thing. If you see my mum, you will see that something really happened to her. Before the incident, she was very happy and easygoing but now, she is always moody. She was very close to Seye. They used to stay together before he got married. If you take a look at her, she has drastically changed; even my dad is trying to pick up the broken pieces of his life. For me, every event brings back a memory of him. If I am with his friends or colleagues, I feel very sad. There was a time when I used to feel guilty about the whole situation. I could have been able to save him.

As for his immediate family, I don't even know how they are coping. We are doing the little we can. My mum has been there for them. As close as we were when he was alive, I cannot even go to his house to see his family as often as I am expected to. Whenever I step foot in his home and see his portrait hanging on the wall, it breaks my heart. I simply just send them money



when I can. His death has changed my family forever. Things will never be the same. My family is a very close-knit one and we were taught how to love.

**Did the DSS offer any financial assistance to his immediate family?**

What they did was to give the family N200,000 for the burial rites of some sort. But, whether they did anything else, I cannot tell. What they did when he died, for me, was not encouraging and I don't want to talk about it. A brother of mine used to complain about the treatment then but I just told him to relax because, whether or not the DSS does anything, it won't bring Seye back. Seeing Seye alive is my concern! I have lost my peace. Our family is traumatised.

**What kind of a person was your brother?**

My brother was a peace-loving young man. He was a very cool-headed person. He was lovely, jovial and easygoing. That was Seye for you. He played a lot and he didn't go around looking for trouble.

I learnt that on the day he was killed after he had that fight with the soldiers, he left the place. On coming back to pick up his phone, the officer, who was still angry about the previous fight, grabbed him, beat him up and stabbed him in the neck, while the other one watched, making sure that Seye could not defend himself. They killed him in cold blood. It is painful.

**Did the soldiers not know that he was a DSS officer?**

They did. Everyone in the area knew he was into security services, even though they may not know which of them it was. Those soldiers, who did that to him, knew him and there must have been something between them. They might have been targeting him. That day was just the trigger they needed to kill him. I don't know what they might have been dragging. It is still surprising to me how soldiers can do such a thing to a fellow officer. It beats me. For my brother to fight is also shocking because in my family, we don't fight. His job also forbade him from doing so. So, for him to have fought with those officers beats me. Something must have been wrong somewhere.

**Did your family formally petition the Nigerian Army?**

Petition? I am not sure we did so as a family. But, I think one of my brothers wrote to them officially and they never responded. That brother of mine was the one who wrote to the DSS, making some demands and complaining about a lot of things he said were our rights according to the law. But up till this time, there has been no justice on the matter. I am not even sure that the letter got to the people it was supposed to get to. To be honest, at this point, I feel like there is nothing more we can say. All else has failed.

**Do you think the soldier was arrested?**

There were rumours that he was arrested and was being disciplined by the Army. But, we didn't hear anything about it. It became so frustrating to continue fighting for something that seemed not to have an end. I had to tell my people to just leave everything to God.

**How does this make you feel about the justice system?**

Justice in Nigeria is almost non-existent. It is until injustice happens to you that you will understand that. There is still a lot of work to be done.