

Kwara policeman detained for abandoning work dies in Kogi cell

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Taiye Atobiloye

By Deji Lambo

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A policeman serving under the Kwara State Police Command, Taiye Atobiloye, has died in a cell at the D Division of the Kogi State Police Command, following his detention for being absent from duty for two days at the Zone 8 Command, Lokoja, Kogi State.

PUNCH Metro gathered that Atobiloye, with service number 232980, who was attached to the Oke Onigbin Division in Kwara State, was posted for a special duty called Quick Intervention at the Zone 8 Command for a month.

After his resumption in Lokoja, the policeman was said to have been absent from duty for two days and was later found.

Our correspondent gathered that as punishment for his absence without permission, Atobiloye was detained in a cell.

A source, while chronicling the circumstances surrounding the incident, said Atobiloye languished in the cell for eight days, adding that the policeman died in detention.

The source said, “What happened was that every month, the Zone 8 Command usually picks policemen from every division and posts them for special duty for a month in Zone 8 Command, Lokoja, and after one month, the policemen will return home.

“So, Atobiloye, who was attached to the Oke Onigbin Division, was part of the policemen posted to the Zone 8 Command, Lokoja, but when he resumed, he didn’t come for work for two days and was punished by being detained in a cell for about eight days.

“It was when policemen checked on him in the cell that they realised he had slumped and died in the cell. At the cell he was detained, only offending policemen are usually detained there, so it is likely he was alone in the cell.”

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A relative of the deceased cop, Femi Igbekele, while lamenting the events that claimed Atobiloye's life in a post on *Facebook*, said efforts by his family members, including his wife, to contact him on the phone after he left for special duty proved abortive.

The post read in part, *"AP No 232980 Inspector Taiye Atobiloye, serving at Kwara State Command, attached to the Oke Onigbin Division was sent to Lokoja Zone 8 on special duty called Quick Intervention."*

"For the past eight days, all family members were calling him but no response from his phone number as the phone was ringing but nobody picked, likewise his wife called him and nobody picked (up) the call until the information reached the family that he was detained at the D (Division) Lokoja, and died in the cell."

Contacted, the spokesperson for the Zone 8 Command, Ruth Awi, who confirmed the development, said Atobiloye, after reporting for special duty at the command, absconded from duty and was nowhere to be found for two days until policemen found him drunk.

She said the cop was detained for him to get himself, adding that he died in custody.

She said, "He was not detained at the Zonal Headquarters, he was detained at the D Division in Lokoja. He reported at the Zonal Headquarters and then disappeared into thin air; there are punishments for people who abscond from duty without any excuse. But in his case, he did not only stay away from work, he was drunk when he was found.

"For the effect of the drink to be cleared, the boss said he should stay in the cell for two days until he is fit for interrogation to explain where he went to and where he was coming from. So, he was detained at the D Division for about two or three days after which the news came to us that he gave up."