

Parents kick as police abandon slain Lagos boy in mortuary

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| By Dayo Oyewo

The parents of a 14-year-old boy, Mubarak, who was said to have been killed by a stray bullet on November 4, 2021, at the Command bus stop in the Meiran area of Lagos State, have accused the police of abandoning the corpse of their child in the mortuary.

Speaking with *PUNCH Metro* on Tuesday, the late Mubarak's father, Olamilekan Sanyaolu, alleged that the police had refused to investigate the circumstances that led to the death of his child and bring the culprit to book.

The late Mubarak, an apprentice and secondary school student, was hit by a bullet allegedly shot by a police officer attached to the Meiran Police Command while returning from his workshop. He died instantly after the bullet ripped open his stomach.

The incident happened while the officers were said to be dispersing tricycle riders who were protesting the alleged killing of their colleague by the police over a N100 bribe.

The day Mubarak was killed, his corpse was said to have been taken to the morgue at the Yaba Mainland Hospital by the police.

Olamilekan, however, lamented that the corpse was still in the morgue, adding that efforts to get justice for him had been allegedly frustrated by the police.

He said, "Since my son died, we have not retrieved his corpse from the mortuary. The day he died, the police took his corpse to the morgue. And they have not done anything to investigate the matter. When we went to the mortuary on the third day, the attendants said they did not know the child. When we later identified him, the cloth he wore when he was killed was still on him with blood stains.

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"They told us that the police officers who brought him said they found his body on the roadside and decided to bring the corpse there. I told them it was a lie and explained what happened to them. After the incident, we wrote a letter to the state command and they told us that the case had been referred to the State Criminal Investigation Department, Pantí. When we got there, we learnt that the case had been assigned to one Supol Alonge. They told us that day that the police officer who fired the shot had been arrested and in custody."

Our correspondent learnt that Olamilekan welcomed a set of twins with his wife, Abidemi, on Tuesday, November 7, barely three days after commemorating the death of Mubarak.

The bereaved father, however, accused the investigating police officer in charge of the case of trying to deny the police involvement in the killing of his son during their next visit.

Oladimeji revealed further that the police claimed they carried out an autopsy, adding that the family was not aware of it.

He said, “During our next visit to the SCID at Panti, the IPO in charge of the case almost assaulted me for introducing myself as the father of the child killed by the police. He asked who told me that it was the police who killed him. That was when they told me that an autopsy had been conducted on the corpse. The people who went there with me that day asked them why they carried out the autopsy without the knowledge of the family. We also asked for the report of the autopsy but they did not give it to us. The IPO first said he could not find my number and I told him that my number was on the case document he kept with himself. Then he later replied that we should go ahead and carry out our own independent autopsy at LASUTH.

“That was the last time we heard from the police. They have refused to probe and prosecute the officer responsible for my son’s death. This is a child I raised from day one of his birth and nothing happened to him until the police killed him. Just because I am poor, the police decided to do nothing about it. No single visit from the police since the incident happened. The lawyer who offered to assist us pro bono later got into politics and could not follow up. I want justice for my son and I also demand compensation from the police.”

The state Police Public Relations Officer, Benjamin Hundeyin, could not be reached as calls made to his phone were not answered. A text message sent afterwards had yet to be replied to as of the time this report was filed.