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Grieving father accuses Ogun police of indifference, demands son's corpse

Victor Ayeni

Since the tragic event of November 7, 2023, the life of Mr Samson Oyediran has been altered in a deeply agonising way. The experience is one that many parents never fully recover from.

On that dark Tuesday, 25-year-old Sunday Oyediran, left the house in the morning to buy Premium Motor Spirit at a filling station close to a garage in Dalemo, Alakuko, Lagos State.

Unfortunately, what his father met was Sunday's lifeless body, and the detail of what happened to him has been his grouse with the police, whom he accused of negligence.

Narrating his story on a Yoruba radio programme called 'Kokoro Alate' aired on Agidigbo FM in Ibadan, Samson blamed members of the Articulate Motorcycle Owners and Riders Association of Nigeria, Ogun State chapter, for his son's death.

In the video of the radio interview posted by Oriyomi Hamzat on Facebook last Friday and which has been shared by over 667 users as of Wednesday, the distraught father said an argument ensued between his son and the commercial motorcyclist, who conveyed him to the filling station.

Trying to fight back tears, Samson explained that while the altercation was ongoing, a member of AMORAN identified simply as Owotutu, struck the deceased with what was believed to be a voodoo ring.

He explained, "One of the AMORAN union members popularly called Owotutu killed my son by beating him with a ring. This happened in Dalemo, Alakuko garage in Lagos.

"On the morning of Tuesday, November 7, 2023, Sunday went to buy petrol at a filling station close to the garage. He boarded a commercial motorcyclist that was operated by a man from the North.

"The motorcyclist charged him N200 but when he got to his destination, Sunday told him that he had N100 with him and would collect some change at the filling station and give him the balance.

"The motorcyclist vehemently disagreed, insisting he must be paid his complete fare. The AMORAN people came from the other lane of the road and intervened in the matter. The Okada man explained his story and my son narrated his version."

'Victim slumped, died'

The bereaved father said he learned that there were two passengers on the bike. Sunday was seated between the rider and the other passenger.

Samson added that both young men appealed to the motorcyclist to be patient and that they would give him his money, but he insisted that he would not convey them to the station.

"The union people took sides with the Okada rider and demanded that my son pay him. Sunday disembarked from the bike and explained his intention to them. They began to mock him and asked what he had that made him feel important.

"Instead of settling the dispute or taking them to the filling station to ensure that the motorcyclist got his money, Owotutu brought out a ring and hit my son from the back with it and he slumped. He began to defecate and urinate on the spot and died right there. Another member of AMORAN, Sheriff, who was there, was arrested and taken to the Eleweran Police Station in Abeokuta."

Police reluctance

Samson stated that after his son's demise, he reported the case at the Alayinla Police Station, Agbado, in the Ife Local Government Area of Ogun State.

He stated, "Officers from there came along with those from Alakuko. Those from Alakuko came with about four cars to the scene. When they arrived, they asked me what I wanted and I told them that I wanted to go and bury my child. God gave him to me and He had taken him away."

"The Investigating Police Officer gave me a book and asked me to write a statement and sign. He also signed it. He inquired where we were taking the corpse and I told him we were headed for a place beside the Alayinla Police Station in Alagbado to buy a small plot of land to bury him. He told us to go to the station to collect a report and go ahead and bury him."

"But when we got to the Alayinla Police Station, the story changed. The officers told us that they received a call from the Eleweran command headquarters that we shouldn't bury my son but take the corpse to the mortuary and transfer the case there. So, the corpse was taken to the mortuary that same day."

The deceased's father stated that he was directed to visit Eleweran where the suspect was detained and there he met the state Commissioner of Police, Abiodun Alamutu.

Samson added, "When we got to the station, they turned the whole thing into a charade as if it was a chicken that died. Their superiors were asking me how I was sure that it was a voodoo ring that was used to strike my son and I told them to come to where it happened and do their investigations."

"The police boss said he was born in a traditional household in Itoko (an area in Abeokuta), that when someone is hit with such a ring, he turns dark and repulsive, so how could I say my son was hit with a ring? They asked me to see an IPO and he took my statement and wrote it down."

•CP Alamutu



•Samson

•Photo: Agidigbo FM

"When he was done, they asked how they would get to Lagos and requested transport fare from me. I complained that I was still grieving the loss of my son, should I still be the one to provide transport fare? I didn't have it. Since then, they haven't done anything about the case."

Corpse in mortuary

With a tone of sadness in his voice, Samson claimed that the suspect who allegedly killed his son had fled the community and accused the police of neglecting the case.

The distraught father said, "The police are not looking for him (suspect). I am told that he still comes around to the area in the evening. Residents still see him around and they told me that there is a church around Abule Iroko, where he sits at night."

"They (the police) have been giving me unnecessary stress. I told them that I was not interested in pursuing the case any longer and that they should release my son's corpse from the mortuary. Up till now, they have not released his corpse to me, but they have been stressing me. They knew I didn't have any money or influential people to get justice for me."

"I want the police to release the corpse to me. If they like, they can release the suspected killer and allow him to continue his killing spree. Maybe if he murders a family member of the police, they will know how to arrest him, but I want them to release the corpse to us. I no longer have any trust in that investigation."

AMORAN boss responds

Speaking with Saturday PUNCH, the state Chairman of AMORAN, Nurudeen Alowonle, said the case had been settled at the station when the police determined that the deceased was not hit with a voodoo ring as

alleged.

He stated, "There is no substance to the allegation made. The Commissioner of Police himself intervened in that case and he settled it. I don't understand what is wrong with the man (Samson). The CP pointed out that if a person is struck with a voodoo ring, the entire body would be darkened."

"Maybe the boy had underlying health issues like hypertension such that when the altercation started, it was triggered. Those who were there told us that he suddenly slumped and died. We have gone to the station to settle this case and each person has given their statements, but the father has been reporting the matter everywhere."

"I don't know if Sheriff has been released; maybe he is just released today. Because the police arrested four members of our union there and they were detained for about a week in the course of the investigation. So, after the investigation, the police granted them bail and stated that the deceased was not hit with a ring as alleged."

Medical expert's opinion

Commenting on the case, an internal medicine specialist and Chief Executive Officer of Lifebox Labs, Dr Olusina Ajidahun, in an interview with our correspondent opined that Sunday might have had a seizure during the argument, noting that an autopsy would reveal the cause of death.

He noted, "What you described I would say it looks like a seizure. The guy might be a seizure disorder patient or it was a new seizure for some reason because we understand that some seizures can manifest as loss of consciousness, and the person can have a type of dysfunction that may cause the person to defecate or urinate on themselves."

"There may be a possibility that the voodoo ring triggered all of these because I don't want to eliminate the existence of the spiritual, but it's likely that he (deceased) had a seizure and fell so hard on the ground, and in such cases, he had a traumatic brain injury. An autopsy will be crucial to reveal what happened."

When our correspondent contacted the state Police Public Relations Officer, Omolola Odutola, for comments she claimed to be unaware of the incident.

"Thank you for reaching out. I am sorry I am not aware of this," she wrote.



•Alowonle