

panorama



Park officials hit my son with charms, iron rod – Murdered OOU student's father

Raymond Onadipe, the father of Oluwatosin Onadipe who died after he was allegedly hit with an iron rod on the head by officials of Ago motor park in the Ijebu North Local Government Area of Ogun State on December 17 speaks with JOHNSON IDOWU on the incident

WHAT is your relationship with the late Oluwatosin?

Oluwatosin was my son before the wicked ones took him away from me. He was a graduate of Computer Science from Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye.

There are reports he was missing before the day his corpse was found on the road. When did you see him last?

On December 17, he spoke with his brother on the phone around 2:47 pm that he was at Ago Motor Park going to the Redeemed Christian Church of God camp. When his brother called him back some minutes later, he was not picking up his calls. After several calls, we thought maybe he was having a silent moment; that is praying; since he went to camp. Throughout that Sunday and Monday, Oluwatosin did not pick up his call and his phone was ringing.

What did you do after that?

By Monday (December 18) afternoon, his phone stopped ringing. So I instructed his brother to go and report a case of a missing person at the Ago Police Station which he did.

How did you get to know about his death?

On Friday, December 22, the brother tried Oluwatosin's line again and it rang. The person who picked up the call told him he found the phone on the road and that the owner could come and pick it up at Ode-Remo. I was then suspicious that Ode-Remo and Ago were far from each other. I asked why and how Oluwatosin's phone got to Ode-Remo.

The next morning by 6am, I went to Ode-Remo and I reported at the police station where I was assigned police officers to accompany me to get the phone. When I got to the point of collection, the person introduced himself as the Seriki Hausa of the community. The Seriki told us that two of his boys who went to Ijebu-Ijesa in Ago-Iwoye were the ones who saw the phone. The police arrested those who found the phone and we moved to Ago Police station.

On Monday (December 25), I was called by the police and they told me that those who picked up the late Oluwatosin's phone took the police to where they picked it up, but they discovered that a corpse was buried along the roadside by health workers from the Odogbolu Local Government Area, which was said to be Oluwatosin's corpse, and that I have two options of either exhuming his body or leaving it where it was buried.

Were you contacted by the police or the local government officials before your child was buried by the roadside?

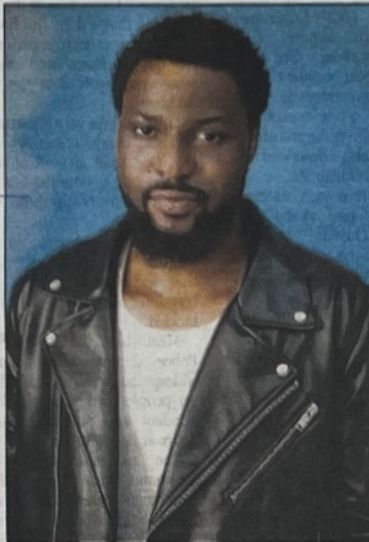
I was not contacted when he was to be buried. It was after they arrested those who found his phone that they called me to say that they had found his body. They said it was buried by the roadside.

Were you told the cause of your son's death?

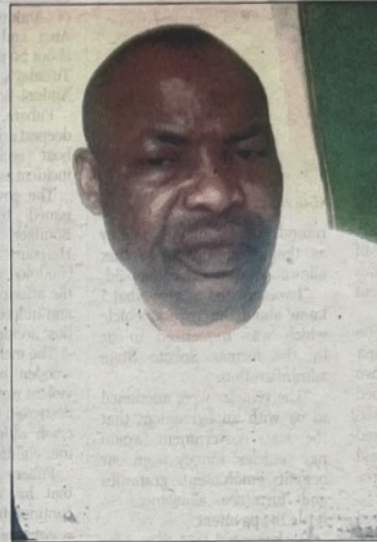
What the police told me was that it was a hit-and-run accident. The Odogbolu Local Government Area authorities also said they were told by the police that it was a hit-and-run accident and that was why they had to bury him because his body was decomposing.

They did not inform me that his corpse was picked up at the motor park even when we reported that he was missing at the Ago Police station. The police were the ones who picked him up at the motor park after he was hit with a rod on his head.

What steps did you take after knowing his corpse was buried without your notice?



• Late Oluwatosin



• Onadipe

On December 26, I made arrangements with some of my family members to go and meet the Odogbolu Local Government Area authorities on the processes of exhuming his body so that we could bury him where it pleased us but they couldn't complete the processes because of the holidays.

We went back on December 27 and met the Odogbolu LG chairman.

When we presented his picture at the Ago Police Station it was then the DPO realised it was the same person we reported missing at his station.

He now said he saw Oluwatosin's corpse when he was coming from the airport on December 18 and he took pictures but he could not act on the incident since it was not his jurisdiction.

There were disparities in the pictures I presented and the one presented by the LG chair, who said they learnt it was a case of a hit-and-run accident. The disparities made me suspect foul play, but I decided to let it go and accept the fate that my son was dead when I was told that his head had gone that is the head was missing by the time they buried him.

How did you know that he was attacked at the motor park?

When I got home from the local government, his elder brother told me he received a voice note from someone who witnessed what happened at the Ago Motor Park on that day.

The eyewitness said he saw him at the park on that faithful day while he was preaching but some officials of the motorpark tried to send him away.

Though, in 2001, he had an experience of instability and he was placed on drugs since then but we observed that he often experienced signs of instability every November. When he experiences this, he doesn't go violent with anybody.

The eyewitness said one of the park officials hit him with an iron rod on the head and he slumped. He also said the

driver of the vehicle he (eyewitness) boarded was the one who was saying it was the immediate past chairman of the park who hit him with the iron rod. That was how we revisited the issue. We later got to know that the police went to the scene of the incident.

When I told the police about the allegation of my late son being hit at the motor park, they said they went there but they did not pick him up, and that he had no injuries on his body. Later, when one of the police teams that went to the park was asked to show the pictures taken at the scene, there was blood all over his body.

I queried why they left him alone and how it was possible for someone drenched in blood to walk that long distance from the park to where his body was found. I moved the case to the Area Command where the Area Commander ordered the arrest of officials of the park where my son was allegedly hit on the head and the police team that went to the park. I learnt from the Area Command that the police actually picked him up after the said motor park official hit him but how his body was dumped by the main road and his eventual death remained a mystery begging for an answer.

When the police team was queried, they said they truly picked him up from the park but they dropped him at the OSU gate.

I also gathered from eyewitnesses that he was hit with voodoo so that he wouldn't escape the scene.

The park chairman made a statement that he thought my son was those who wanted to snatch the park from them. I think that was why they took his body far away from the scene when they realised what they had done.

Has he been preaching before?

He is not a too religious person. What I can say is that he had sometimes in the past fallen sick. And that sickness often surged every November and when the signs of his sickness showed, I observed that he was always religious during that period. He would always go about with his Bible and he would be praying too.

Have the police arrested anyone in connection to this?

I was told that the chairman who hit him with an iron rod on the head, and the police team that went to the scene and took his body had been arrested.

I was also invited to the police headquarters in Elewera where I met with the Commissioner of Police who assured me they would investigate the case thoroughly.

Did he discuss any future ambitions with you before his demise?

He wanted to be a musician. If you see his dressing, the way he does his things, you will see the signs there. He loves music and it has been his dream to become a renowned musician.

In what way can the state government be of help to you?

I am appealing to well-meaning Nigerians and the Ogun State Government to aid me in getting justice for my son. His death has left a big vacuum in my family and we have not been in a good state since the news got to us.

It is understandable if he died from a natural cause but how do you expect me to sleep when the killers of my son are not paying for it? I want justice for my son.

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