

Lagos taskforce vows justice for cop killed by soldier

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Late Saka Ganiyu

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The Lagos State Taskforce has disclosed that it will not relent in seeking justice for one of its personnel, Saka Ganiyu, who was allegedly killed by a power-drunk soldier in the Ojo area of the state.

The Taskforce spokesperson, Abdulraheem Gbadeyan, made this known in a statement on Thursday.

PUNCH Online reported on Wednesday that soldiers attached to the Ojo Cantonment Barracks, led by a yet-to-be-identified colleague, stabbed Ganiyu to death after he was accosted for driving against traffic around Volks Bus Stop, along the Ojo Iyana Iba Road area of Lagos State.

Our correspondent gathered that the soldier, who was not wearing uniform, was driving an unregistered T4 Volkswagen commercial bus against traffic and was stopped by policemen on enforcement duty at the Volks Bus Stop.

Angered by the actions of the policemen, it was learned that an altercation ensued, and the soldier contacted some of his colleagues, who reportedly trooped out of the Ojo Cantonment Barracks and attacked the policemen.

A document chronicling the circumstances surrounding the soldiers' attack on the policemen indicated that Ganiyu sustained varying degrees of injury during the assault and was rushed to the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital for urgent treatment.

Giving an update on the incident, Gbadeyan noted that Ganiyu, with AP/No 223409, had died at the hospital despite medical efforts.

He condemned the attack on the officers who were carrying out their legal duties to ensure compliance with traffic regulations.

The Taskforce spokesperson said, “Despite immediate medical attention and being rushed to the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital, Inspector Ganiyu was tragically pronounced dead.

“The Lagos State Taskforce condemns this brutal and unwarranted attack on law enforcement officers who were dutifully carrying out their legal responsibilities to ensure compliance with traffic regulations and maintain public order in the state.”

While extending condolences to the family of the late officer, Gbadeyan stressed that the agency would ensure justice is served.

“The incident has been escalated to the State Police Command for immediate investigation, and justice will be pursued for the loss of our dedicated officer.

“The Lagos State Taskforce extends its deepest condolences to the family of Inspector Saka Ganiyu during this difficult time.”

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Meanwhile, the Lagos State Police Command stated that it had yet to receive any official communication from the army regarding the incident or the claim of the soldier’s arrest.

A police source, who wished to remain anonymous as they were not authorised to speak on the matter, said no official communication had been made to the police to confirm the arrest of the perpetrator.

The source said, “We are not aware if the soldier has been arrested. No official communication has been made to us to confirm the statement. They only claimed so, but how can we be sure? We are following up on the turn of events, but nothing concrete yet.”

However, the 81 Division of the Nigerian Army announced on Thursday that it had launched a probe into the circumstances surrounding the officer’s death.

In a statement issued by the Deputy Director of Army Public Relations, Lieutenant Colonel Olabisi Ayeni, the division expressed regret over the incident, which stemmed from a disagreement over an alleged traffic rule violation.

The statement added that the soldier involved in the tragic event has been apprehended and handed over to the Military Police for investigation and disciplinary action.

Describing the incident as “highly regrettable,” the army emphasised its commitment to upholding the Nigerian Army’s Code of Conduct and Rules of Engagement.

The statement noted that the army has consistently cautioned its personnel against any conduct that could damage its reputation or strain relations with other security agencies and the public.

The GOC of the division extended condolences to the family of the deceased officer and the Nigeria Police Force while assuring that a thorough investigation is underway to ensure that justice is served.

“The Nigerian Army remains committed to fostering collaboration with other security agencies to secure lives and property, in line with its constitutional mandate,” the statement added.

The division reaffirmed its dedication to maintaining professional standards and safeguarding public trust during and after the investigation.