

Riddles Over Death Of Alausa Worker

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Who killed 31-year old Adedeji Onafuye, a young man attached to a consultant working at the Land Bureau, Alausa Secretariat, Ikeja? Is it armed robbers or the police?

This is the unresolved riddle as the family of the deceased prepares to bury him today at the Atan cemetery in Lagos.

While the police claimed that the deceased was shot dead by armed robbers who invaded Aina Street, Ojodu Berger on 16 November, wife of the deceased, Mrs. Tomiwa Onafuye, disagreed. She accused policemen attached to Ojodu-Abiodun Police Station of killing her husband and appealed to Governor Babatunde Raji Fashola and the state commissioner of police to probe the death.

Police information on the death of Onafuye who got married in February this year revealed that he was shot dead while returning home in his red Nissan car with registration number GO 990 KJA.

The police at Ojodu-Abiodun told *P.M. NEWS* that five robbers stormed Aina Street, Ojodu in a Volkswagen Jetta car at 11 p.m. and while trying to gain entrance into one of the buildings, the landlord alerted the police at

Ojodu Divisional Headquarters.

The robbers, it was gathered, held one of the tenants (name withheld) of the building who had just arrived in his Kia Picanto car hostage and used him to gain entrance into the building. The police said they arrived the street and went into the building but did not see the robbers. Unknown to them, the robbers had climbed the fence of a school nearby, still holding their hostage.

As soon as the police left, the robbers came out of their hiding place and started firing sporadically into the air to scare occupants of the building. In the process, stray bullets were said to have hit a woman in the building while Onafuye was also hit. He died on the spot and his corpse was taken to the station.

But the wife of the deceased, Mrs. Tomiwa Onafuye, a lawyer from Ijebu-Igbo, rejected police explanation of the cause of her husband's death.

"They have killed my joy, my joy and my caring husband. We only got married in February," she sobbed.

Narrating the circumstances surrounding her husband's death, Mrs Onafuye said: "On Tuesday, before he was killed on 16 November, 2011, he was coming home from work around

8 p.m when the police said he took one-way. He was arrested and taken to the police station at Ojodu. The policemen left him there and went back to their checkpoint.

"I called him and he told me that he was arrested. He said the police asked him to pay them N5,000 to free him. What baffled me was that during my conversation with him on phone, I heard the police saying that he was a robber and my husband replied that he was never a robber. He was later released at 12 a.m. to come home.

"On the day he was killed, he was coming back from work and he called me at 8 p.m. He told me he was going to drop his friend. He later used his friend's phone to call me that he had a low battery and that he would buy Shawarma for me.

"We spoke until 11 p.m. He told me he was on his way home and I said I was on my way to the Redeemed Evangelical Mission Church, TREM, for a vigil.

"When I returned from the vigil on Saturday, I did not see his car and I called my neighbour to open the gate for me. I tried his line and it was switched off. I slept and woke up around 9 a.m. and called his Zain line. It was busy. I tried it again and someone picked it. The man described himself as a police officer and that my husband was involved in a ghastly motor accident but still alive. I quickly rushed to the Ojodu Police Station where I was told that he was dead. Up till now I have not seen his corpse.

"I am appealing to Governor Babatunde Raji Fashola to look into this incident and bring the perpetrators to justice," the distraught woman pleaded.

When *P.M. NEWS* visited Ojodu Police Station, a senior police officer who did not want his name in print because he was not authorised to talk also narrated the circumstances surrounding the death of Onafuye.

According to him, "the robbers who came to Aina Street that day attempted to rob the Zenith Bank and when they could not gain entrance, they decided to rob a building. When the landlord got through to me on phone, I sent my man to the place but the robbers had left.

From our investigation, it was while the deceased was going home that he was shot by the robbers," he stated.

The corpse, it was learnt, was deposited at the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital, LASUTH, Ikeja.

MA, Engineer Babatunde Edu confirmed that aggressive enforcement of the law had begun and that over 200 Okada riders had been arrested so far.

He lamented that several criminal activities were being perpetrated through the use of Okada by men of the underworld.

Governor Fashola, who was bitter about the menace posed by Okada riders, vowed that the enforcement would be total. To show his seriousness, he personally led a team of officials to arrest five Okada riders who drove against the traffic in Apapa area of the state last week. Fashola disclosed that a new policy was in the offing to deal decisively with the problems posed by Okada riders.

"As I have said to all those who cared to listen, if Okada is a problem to you, stop using it; because it is a business and if you don't patronize it, it will leave you alone," he stated.

The governor arrested more Okada riders driving against the traffic on Sunday in Badagry during his tour of ongoing projects in the state.

"You will see my next line of action in the fullness of time, but I think ultimately

Lagosians must decide whether or not they want Okada.

"In the meantime, they have to comply with our rules and if they don't, they will have the law enforcement agencies to contend with. We will not allow this incessant and sheer disregard for our laws, those who cannot comply should leave our state."

Rising from the state Security Council meeting last week, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), Mr. Tunde Sobulo disclosed that a new policy on commercial motorcycle is on the way to deal with errant riders who still disobey government rules and regulations on the operation of commercial motorcycles (Okada) on the state's roads.

According to him, "Okada riders are still giving us problems. They are still riding against the traffic and carrying two to three passengers and without helmet. Majority of the culprits are those that are not members of the motorcycleists' unions. There is nothing to identify them with. But I believe there is going to be a policy soon and when it is out we will know how to deal with them."