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# Wife: Police Tortured My Husband To Death; No, He Committed Suicide —Police

The mysterious death of a furniture maker, Mr. Ibrahim Athahiru, 42 in the cell at the Ikoyi Police Station, Lagos, southwest Nigeria, has continued to raise dust as the wife of the deceased, Blessing, alleged that her husband was tortured to death by the police. But the police insist that he committed suicide inside the cell with a sponge.

Blessing Athahiru, 29, a mother of two and the family of the deceased rejected police claim and called on the authorities to investigate the death of their bread winner in police cell.

*P.M.NEWS* investigations revealed that Athahiru was arrested at his Lacowe area residence in Ajah on 14 October, 2011 for allegedly swindling an Italian woman, Catarina, of N40 million. A week after his arrest, Athahiru died in police custody. The police claimed that he committed suicide in the cell with a sponge on 21 October. Before his death, Athahiru had complained to his wife of extreme torture in the hands of his interrogators at the Ikoyi Police Station.

Investigations revealed further that Athahiru was invited by the Italian woman to get a warehouse in Ajah for business purposes, which his family said he did by purchasing a piece of land for N12 million.

It was gathered that the Italian also gave him money to buy land for a filling station in the area and he purchased two plots of land for this purpose.

Trouble, however, started when the woman decided to inspect the warehouse and the site for the filling station and discovered that there was nothing on ground. The plot of land said to have been bought by the deceased was disputed by the owners who denied knowing the deceased.

Suspecting foul play, the Italian reported the matter to the police at Ikoyi and the younger brother of Athahiru was arrested when the police did not find him at home.

On arriving home, Athahiru was told of his brother's arrest and he went to the police station where he was promptly arrested and his younger brother freed.

Blessing alleged that her husband was tortured by the police in an attempt to force him to disclose where he kept the millions of Naira allegedly given to him by the Italian woman.

Mrs. Athahiru said during her visits to the police station, her husband would narrate how he was beaten and tortured by his interrogators and beg her to contact his family to look for money to bail him out.

*P.M.NEWS* also gathered that the man who sold a piece of land to Athahiru for N12 million was arrested by the police, detained for two days and released on bail after paying some money.

Blessing, who hails from Akwa Ibom State, disclosed further that she saw blood coming out of her husband's nose and anus during one of her visits to him in his cell.

"At first, when I got to the police station, I was not allowed to see him but when I saw him, they have beaten him seriously. He said he was being tortured and was bleeding from the anus. I decided to go for a lawyer but he objected to this," she said.

Blessing added that his husband asked him to look for money to get him out of detention and that the family was able to raise N500,000 which was allegedly collected by the police, yet, her husband was not released.

"My husband died in the cell as a result of torture by the police. Why should the police lie that he committed suicide with a sponge in the cell. It is a lie. He died exactly one week after he was arrested by the police," she stated.

She called on the authorities to probe the circumstances surrounding her husband's death and bring the culprits to book. The remains of Athahiru are still deposited at the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital, LASUTH mortuary. It is not certain whether an autopsy has been conducted or not, two months after he died.

Reacting to *P.M.NEWS* enquiries on the death of Athahiru in her cell, the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of Ikoyi Police Station, Aisha Haruna, a

Superintendent of Police, confirmed on phone that Athahiru committed suicide in the cell with a sponge.

She said there was nothing to hide about the incident, adding that he was found dead in the cell. She asked our reporter to seek more clarifications from the Police Public Relations Office, PPRO, Samuel Jinadu, who also confirmed that Athahiru committed suicide in the cell.

Police sources at the State Criminal Investigation Department, SCID, Panti, Yaba confirmed that the matter had been transferred to the department and that investigation was ongoing.

—*Kazeem Ugbodaga*



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## 19 Comments for “Wife: Police Tortured My Husband To Death; No, He Committed Suicide —Police”

1.

*jj*

[December 20, 2011 - 2:39 pm](#)

Madam, y u dey lie afterall the man must have been strip of all dangerous items from his body n clothing as well.

My take is Police like to cover up things that r glaring to everyone. Na only GOD can separate Police and Money.

Aisha u r not been honest....Allahu sees u( remember verse of the holy books)

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2. [kolawolel Ishola Anthonio](#)  
[December 20, 2011 - 8:19 pm](#)

The authority should transfer this case to abuja for more clarification on this case i don't trust the police, when they make silly mistake they always fine some where to hang their blames. how can one person commit suicide with sponge even if he as to use net sponge it will be done by two people, he cant kill him self alone with sponge he must have be strangled with the sponge. i dont trust our nigerian police when it come to money issue their is every tendency that the italian woman had given them a lot of money so as to deal with the guy but in the process of torturing the guy die, the police will never admit or say the guy die in the process or as a result of torture. the govt should please see to this issue because we are talking about irreplaceable some thing here the DPO of ikoyi police station should be interrogated by another security agent not the police because if it is police to police it will be the case of back to back ie the naval or military or air police should investigate the issue not the normal police that is the way we can get to the route of this matter. i am sure the police are not saying the truth of the matter.

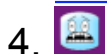
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3. [Ugochukwu](#)  
[December 20, 2011 - 8:27 pm](#)

What is baffling is why police would keep a suspect in cell for over a week without releasing him or charging him to court over civil matter. It was not a case of armed robbery or kidnapping. The dead is gone, and gone forever. I understand the pains in being swindled, I have been a victim severally, but I always placed human life above any other consideration. There is no denying the fact that police must have gone too far in applying confession extraction technique during the interrogation. But they must always know a line not to cross. I recommend full fledge investigation involving some human right agency to collaborate or otherwise the police or Blessing's claims.

[Reply](#)



4. [Soji Toki](#)  
[December 20, 2011 - 8:56 pm](#)

Nigerians(police) sacrificed a Nigerian in Nigeria for a foreigner.

[Reply](#)

5.



*dan*

[December 20, 2011 - 9:11 pm](#)

What i will say is that these foreigners in nigeria always act like kings. Imagine an italian giving a furniture maker such a huge money to buy property in ajah upon all ajah land wahala. why cant he go through a registered or recognised real estate agents for easy processing. The blame should be on him for using and killing that man. Trust nigeria police, they will always be active where they can get some duh. Besides, i witnessed similar situation last 2 weeks in apapa in which an house help was arrested for missing money – over \$11,000 from a lebanese. the money was not found, and the girl ( which i know to have worked there for almost ten years without a single allegation of theft during those years because they really trust her so much according to them) was arrested. up til now, i wonder what will be happening to her also because she has not been released as the warrant of arrest came from hi power connection. God will console the widow

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*Paul*

[December 21, 2011 - 1:32 am](#)

The girl will get pregnant before she is released from jail, there is not doubt about that

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6.



*frank*

[December 20, 2011 - 9:22 pm](#)

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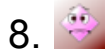


7. *Chinyere*

[December 20, 2011 - 9:37 pm](#)

D police will never say d truth nor admit their fault, d poor man is no more there to defend himself or say his own side of d story. Govt should investigate this seriously because this is one out of a thousand police brutality on civillians.

[Reply](#)



8. *ominya*

[December 20, 2011 - 10:17 pm](#)

nigeria police is a criminal set of people. They are all liars who do cover their bad. They killed this man, God is seeing every thing.

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9. *Sokunbi*

[December 20, 2011 - 10:40 pm](#)

It was unfortunate that d thief died, and most of d commentators are criminals, imagine some of them blaming d italian. they have no conscience.

[Reply](#)



10. *Tonnie*

[December 20, 2011 - 10:43 pm](#)

Police! They are worst than robbers, because arm robbers wil spare u when one surrender, when they believe u dont have. Police will stop at nothing or they kill, dont mind d Dpo, that is why 90% of dem die horribly. I pray God grnt d widow d fortitude bear d madam has allow her boys to kill and make her fellow woman widowed because of moni

[Reply](#)



11. *Africanblood*

[December 20, 2011 - 11:39 pm](#)

This case is like a bank telling a customer that the bank is not paying him his or her money in the bank because thieves robbed the bank of the money. The man died in police custody, the Nigerian police should tell us whether they or the man was responsible for his safety while in their custody. And if the police is responsible for the safety of somebody who is in their care or custody, what did they do to keep him safe and who permitted them to keep the man in their custody for such a long time. Then my own personal question remains, how did this man get sponge and were there no cell-mates with the man and cell-guard(s) to watch over them or him. Until i get the answers to these questions i believe the police know more than they are telling us. As far as i am concerned that man is still innocent until the Nigerian police prove me wrong by providing the accused person who i believe is still in their custody till now in his health condition when they arrested him to defend himself in a competent court of law.

[Reply](#)

12.



[Aremo USA](#)

[December 21, 2011 - 1:04 am](#)

QUESTION :hw did d sponge gt into d cell? hw did a detained suspect in their custody committed suicide? so who's taking f blame he didn't die in NDLEA cell bt police cell. simple case, dey are responsible fr any suspect, dead/alive in their custody! period! D man was .....MURDERED!!! TO HELP HEAL DS COUNTRY, D AUTHORITY MUST PROPERLY INVESTIGATE DS CASE AND BRING D CULPRITS TO BOOK!

[Reply](#)

13.



[ylagos](#)

[December 21, 2011 - 5:12 am](#)

hmmmm, how did the sponge get into the cell? it is the normal thing with the Nigerian police to stripe suspects naked before they are put into the cell; that is after removing all the suspect has on him or her. thus, how did the sponge get into the cell because the nigerian police cell does not have facilities for bathing? i wonder why the president is playing the "i don't care" game. it is apparent that the regime of the present police IG has recorded the worst police crimes, ranging from scandals, killing of innocent citizens with impunity and hanging it on



stray bullets, flaunting the laws recklessly, bribery and many more. the police would say, 'you have the right to remain silent' yet, they will torture a suspect in their custody all in the name of investigation...i only pray that the president will curb this menace now before it is too late...people may begin to react soon and that will not be healthy. God save this country.

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14. 

*Grey*

[December 21, 2011 - 7:47 am](#)

Horrible, the so called custodians of law are at the helm of braking it.

[Reply](#)

15. 

[ADEYEMI TOBIAS NDUDI](#)

[December 21, 2011 - 7:49 am](#)

THIS GUY WAS SIMPLY MURDERED.....THERE IS A PARLANCE IN POLICE VOCABULARY FOR THIS "SPONGE SUICIDE THING"....."E CHOP SOAP".

THE POLICE WANTED TO GET PART OF THE MONEY FROM HIM BEFORE KILLING HIM. THEY WERE UNLUCKY AS THEY COULD ONLY "SEE" N500,000. HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THE ISSUE OF "EXECUTIVE ROBBERS" WHEN POLICE ESCORTED AN ARMED ROBBER TO THE BANK TO WITHDRAW MONEY i.e. ORUBE BE Et all

[Reply](#)

16. 

*timi*

[December 21, 2011 - 9:00 am](#)

Police is your FRIEND ....

[Reply](#)

17. 

*YEM*

[December 21, 2011 - 12:46 pm](#)

younger brother of Athahiru was arrested when the police did not find him at home.

ONLY IN NIGERIA!

@ timi: Nigerian Police is INDEED your FRIEND.

Very soon Nigerian accused will prefer to be handled by American and British police

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18.



*omotayo*

[December 21, 2011 - 1:18 pm](#)

although, what the man done is not good, but they could have charge him to court.

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