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# NewsPlus

Witness to horror

## In my presence, gunmen killed my dad, mum, 2 siblings

By WOLE BALOGUN

**T**hat 22-year-old Oyeyemi Riliwan Oladele still lives today is a miracle. He was supposed to have been dispatched to an early grave in January, this year. His parents, Mr. Sulaimon and Mrs. Kuburat Oyeyemi, as well as his two siblings, Aminat and Aishat, were murdered in cold blood in their home on Tokunboh Street, Lagos, on January 11.

His father was a freelance journalist with one of the national dailies in Lagos.

Oyeyemi, who spoke to the reporter on phone, said he had since been in hiding. He said he had to run away from the hospital - Kenfield Hospital, Igboere, City Hall, Lagos Island - where he had been receiving treatment for nervous shock under police protection.

On the night that he lost his loved ones, Oyeyemi said he was in the toilet when the evil men struck. According to him, he suddenly overheard a loud argument between his father and some unknown men over a certain publication. According to him, his father was adamant that he would not retract the story, even as he allegedly refused a financial settlement.

He told the reporter: "My parents and two of my siblings were murdered on the night of January 11, 2013. I would have also been killed had I not been in the toilet at that time. We were all watching the network news that night as usual, using the generating set, when I was pressed and had to visit the bedroom toilet. I hadn't spent up to 10 minutes in the toilet when I suddenly heard a loud argument between my dad and some unknown men. The strange men were demanding my father's cooperation and telling him they needed him to help retract a story that had been published or was about to be published. My father told them he couldn't do their bidding and also, that he wasn't ready to be bribed. That was the tone of the argument. After that, I suddenly heard gunshots and agonising cries from my father, who was pleading with the men to spare his family. But his pleas fell on deaf ears. Soon after, I heard another agonising cry as the men shot my mother. Then there were more cries, as they turned their guns on Aminat and Aishat. Instinct immediately told me to flee and I found myself quickly jumping out through the back door that leads to our backyard. The loud noise I made when I slammed the door after me must have raised the suspicion of the assassins that there was still another person in the house. The next thing that I heard was a loud command from one of them, demanding that I should stop where I was. But I ran as fast as my legs could carry me. I guess they didn't see me or didn't know which direction I took because I soon found out that I had been running for a long time and was far away from the house.

"I had no place to go. I don't know any relative of my parents and I think they all live outside Lagos. And our parents didn't allow us to know them well enough. So, I



had to return to the house about midnight when I thought things had calmed down. I walked for hours before I got back home. I was too shocked to even tell anyone what had happened. I just had the urge to return home and find out what had happened to my family. I eventually got home and entered through our kitchen and that's all I can remember now."

It was discovered that Oyeyemi actually passed out while resting against the wall in the kitchen that night. One of the neighbours, who craved anonymity for security reasons, said he had gone to the home of the unfortunate family early the next morn-

ing when he saw four persons dead in the living room and an unconscious Riliwan Oyeyemi in the kitchen. It was the neighbour, who rescued Oyeyemi and took him to the hospital.

The Good Samaritan, who said he decided to visit the Oyeyemis that morning, said he had heard gunshots from the house the previous night and wanted to find out what was happening there.

Said the neighbour: "I was shocked to see the lifeless bodies of the Oyeyemis early that morning, January 12. Although we heard gunshots the previous night, no one could come out because it was dark



and there was no power supply. Everyone had thought it was either thieves or policemen, scaring robbers away.

"Riliwan was lucky that I found him after alerting the police. We took him to the hospital for treatment immediately because he had bruises on his hands and legs. We discovered that he had been thoroughly traumatised. He narrated his account to the police that day on his hospital bed where he was being treated under police protection before he finally ran away from the hospital on suspicion of attack and police ineptitude. It was such a very traumatic experience for him, you know, to witness the cold-blooded murder of his parents and two siblings in one swoop.

"The matter was reported to the Lion Building Police Station, Lagos Island, and the remains of the dead Oyeyemis were taken to the General Hospital, Lagos Island.

"I heard the case was later transferred to Abuja but it has since remained one of the many unresolved murder cases before the Nigerian police," the man said.

Explaining to the reporter why he suddenly disappeared, Oyeyemi said: "Initially, I was determined to fight, to use the instrumentality of the law to avenge my parents and siblings' murder but some of my friends advised me against it, saying it would be a careless decision."

"My friends told me: 'Those that masterminded the killing of your parents and siblings would not spare you when they know you are seeking revenge. And we don't have the means to protect you.' Instinct told me to run and that was what I did. There is no justice in this country. I don't think the law can protect a common man like me any longer."