

## CRIMEwatch

# Strange!

FROM ROSE EJEMBI, MAKURDI

**T**he family of slain staff of the Federal Road Maintenance Agency (FERMA), Izahemen Shiyin, in Makurdi, Benue State has demanded justice for their son, Shiyin, who was murdered in Lafia, Nasarawa State, on July 1, 2011, by three gunmen who stormed his residence.

Few months after his death, there was a strange discovery on his bank account. The deceased was discovered to be withdrawing money from his account. By the time the discovery was made in October that year, the account had been depleted to N773 from the credit balance of N433,000 when he was killed in July.

Following the discovery, investigation was conducted and his account officer one Aliyu, was fingered. It was alleged that funds were transferred from the deceased's account to the wife of the account officer. Subsequently, Aliyu and his cousins were arrested and charged to court. However, the family expressed dismay over the trial as a result of the bail granted the accused by the state High Court.

During a press briefing in Makuri recently, the family head, Elder Markins Shiyin, expressed concern over the sudden reprieve given to the accused by the court and wondered why the trial was not given accelerated hearing.

He spoke about their experience since the gruesome murder of their son:

"We discovered that his blackberry phone was taken away after he was killed. He was murdered on July 1, 2011, then later we discovered that money was being withdrawn from his account. The withdrawal was later traced to his account officer.

"Opening balance at the time he was killed was N433,000 and closing balance as at October 11, 2011 was N773.00. We also discovered that the monies were transferred into different accounts including that of the wife of the account officer."

The family head said in the course of police investigation, Aliyu was arrested along with his cousin and both of them were charged to court and remanded in prison for about one year until recently when they were suddenly granted bail by the same judge who had earlier refused to grant them bail.

"The case was making considerable progress when suddenly the judge granted them bail. We don't know why a case of culpable homicide would enjoy bail."

Mother of the deceased, Rosemary, said investigation revealed then that her son was killed by three men out of which two were arrested adding that the case was with the Magistrate Court in Lafia and the accused were promptly taken into prison custody.

Rosemary who cried for the most part of the press conference said the case was later transferred to the Nasarawa State High Court where it suffered series of adjournments on the grounds that investigation was still ongoing for almost one year.

She said the family wrote to the chief judge of the state about the matter but did not receive any reply. She said that in the course of the case, some non governmental organisations lawyers stumbled on it and decided to pursue the matter.

She said through these NGO lawyers,

## Dead man withdraws money from bank

•Family demands justice



•The bereaved member of the family



•The suspects

the case was transferred to the Federal High Court but owing to lack of jurisdiction, had to be returned to the High Court under the same judge that was initially handling it.

The distraught mother who lamented that her son did not deserve to die in that manner expressed surprise that the judge who had earlier refused to grant the accused bail based on the enormity of their alleged crime later granted them bail.

"The last time we went to court, the accused and their sureties did not appear. My boy did not deserve to die like this. Since my son died, I have stooped and was hoping that the judgment would make me rise again.

"I have been suffering for two years now and the only thing that can give me joy is to see that justice is done in this case. I know the case cannot bring back my son but what we are saying is that justice must be done to deter people from taking the lives of others anyhow in this country."

Others who spoke during the press conference including a close friend of the deceased's mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Shuluwa and a friend of the deceased, Joseph Aondona. They insisted that the culprits



•The deceased

must be brought to book so that the case can have a proper closure.