

NEWSPLUS



Sympathisers at the funeral service



Polmi and Lydia on their wedding day

Man dies in motorbike crash three months after wedding

• Agony in Bauchi community, as family buries victim

From **Paul Orude**, Bauchi

LYDIA Polmi Yake from Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area of Bauchi State was devastated. She could not be consoled as the news was broken to her that her husband was dead.

Her beloved husband, Polmi Daniel Yake died on Friday July 17, barely three months after their wedding. He died in a fatal motorcycle accident.

Three months earlier, on April 4, the couple was in a blissful mood and in high spirits as husband and wife looked with optimism towards the future ahead of them. But all their plans were truncated following Polmi's untimely death.

Lydia's husband and a friend, Samuel Sumi Balewa, were returning from an engagement at midnight when his motorcycle suddenly lost control, and crashed at the Kagadam Junction in Yelwa, Bauchi Metropolis. Polmi, who owned the Jincheng motorcycle, was the one riding when the accident occurred.

While his friend, Samuel survived, sustaining minor bruises and a dislocation on his left wrist, Polmi hit his head hard on the concrete pavement. Both men were unconscious after the crash. Polmi later died on the way

to the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa Teaching Hospital, Bauchi, where he was being rushed to.

News of Polmi's death spread rapidly, leaving those who knew him in total disbelief.

Lydia has not stopped crying since receiving the news of her husband's demise. For her, it was as if her whole world came crashing.

A handsome young man, Polmi was every woman's dream. When he asked for her hands in marriage, Lydia was in ecstasy. Her dream came true when they were pronounced husband and wife at Agape Love World Church, Bauchi. The wedding witnessed an unprecedented large turnout. The church, located near Anguwan Makaranta, near Yelwa, was too small to accommodate the large number of guests and well-wishers.

The reception, which was held at Jibril Aminu Model Primary School, was attended by the high and mighty that came from far and near.

"Such is life. Who would have thought that it was a short-lived marriage? The couple was happy as we all danced and toasted to their new union," recalled a family friend who asked not to be named.

Many confirmed to Daily

Sun that the large attendance recorded during Polmi's wedding was a testimony to his family's popularity. The deceased was from a well-known family from Bogoro Local Government Area in Bauchi State.

After their honeymoon, Lydia went back to Rishi in Toro Local Government Area of the state where she worked at the Primary Health Care Centre, while her husband settled down to work in his father's company.

Polmi's father, Daniel Kokko Yake, from Muari in Bogoro, was former Deputy State Chairman of the People's Democratic Party (PDP). Yake died in 2002, leaving Polmi, his eldest child to take care of his mother and siblings.

Lydia's friends described Polmi as a very caring husband who loved Lydia so much.

"They were so much in love. After the wedding, Polmi was seriously making efforts to settle down in one place with his wife," a family friend who pleaded anonymity recalled.

But on July 17, while Lydia was making plans to come to Bauchi to spend time with her husband that weekend as she usually did, little did she know that fate had other plans.

Samuel, who recounted

the last hours he spent with Polmi, said they both left the Customs Barracks along Yelwa Road in Bauchi Metropolis late on Polmi's motorcycle after attending a friend's engagement party.

"The celebrant also bought a new car, so we were all celebrating into the night. What made us to be so late that day was because people cooking food did not start the cooking on time.

"After eating, we took our leave. I wanted to go home but he asked me to follow him to his house at GRA and that I could leave in the morning.

"It was not up to 20 minutes after that we crashed. I can't say what actually happened. It was so sudden. I can't even remember what happened because no car or anything hit us.

"We landed by the side of the road. I passed out and when I woke up, I saw Polmi lying on the ground. Some people came and we called a friend to take us to the hospital. I feel very bad losing a friend like Polmi. I was one of the men in suit during his wedding."

Bello, a carpenter on Bafanjo Street leading to Kagadam, lamented that the particular junction where Polmi died had claimed at least five lives in recent times.

"It is a dangerous junction. Many people have died there. I can remember about five persons," Bello told Daily Sun.

On Monday July 20, in a twist of irony, a large crowd gathered at the Christian Worship Centre Bauchi, for the funeral service of Polmi.

After the service, amidst wailing by Polmi's wife and other sympathisers, the long convoy moved to Muari, Polmi's hometown.

Polmi, born February 10, 1981, was laid to rest near his father's grave, as his aged mother, Mrs. Liatu, his four siblings and widow, Lydia and

thousands of sympathisers wept uncontrollably as his remains were lowered into mother earth.

Among the dignitaries who attended the burial was the wife of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mrs. Gimbiya Yakubu Dogara, former Commissioner for Water Resources in the state, Pharmacy Bukar Bukata, his uncle, Brigadier-General Marcus Yake (rtd), and wife of Senator Ali Wakili representing Bauchi South Senatorial District, among others.

Speaking on the demise of his young nephew, Brig-Gen Yake, described it as another sad chapter in the history of the Yake dynasty.

In an interview with Daily Sun at his country home near where his elder brother Daniel was laid to rest 13 years ago, the retired army general described Polmi's death as shocking and sad.

He said: "It is very sad because Polmi was at the prime of his life. He has been thinking of taking care of the challenge that Daniel, his father left after his death. The responsibility was huge because his father died some years ago. You can imagine being the first son.

"Polmi had responsibility to his mother and younger ones and this young man just got married three months and ten days before his death. His death has created a vacuum that must be filled. The bible says we must give thanks to God. In as much as it is painful, we are consoled in the word of God. We feel sad losing him but we thank God. Death is inevitable but the major thing is when your own time come, will you be prepared?"

For Lydia, although April 4 carries pleasant memories, July 17 is the day she will hate to remember in her life. It was the day death snatched her better half, Polmi, leaving her with an uncertain future.