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## Agony of a family in search of justice

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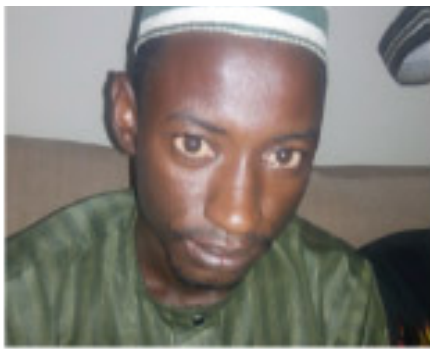


**Njidda and his wife before his death**



**Richard Kenan**





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Billy Graham Abel, Yola

On December 20 last year, a 34-year-old businessman, Yusuf Njidda, from Bille village in Demsa Local Government Area of Adamawa State, travelled to Numan community to restock his provision store for the coming Christmas. He also planned to fix the engine of his grinding machine.

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...rth. Shortly after, he became the victim of some hit and run drivers, an incident that led to his Road Safety Commission (FRSC).

...t who was operator of the grinding machine, Richard Kenan, went on a motorcycle to Numan where they shopped for all the necessary spare parts to keep their engine up and running. They had also purchased stocks for their provision store and sent them ahead to Bille in a car, while they were returning on their motorcycle.

An eyewitness told Daily Sun that on the fateful day, on their way out of Numan, an FRSC vehicle swiftly overtook Njidda and Richard just before they approached the FRSC office in Numan. And that incident caused Mjidda his life and left the other man unconscious.

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Even though they had committed no apparent offence, it was gathered that the two men apologised to the FRSC operatives. But the operatives allegedly started raining insults on the men. And as they went on their way, the officers reportedly chased after them and knocked them down. Then the officers turned back and drove away.

The incident left Njidda and his partner, Richard unconscious and gasping for breath. The two men were rushed to the hospital and Richard returned home after he regained consciousness.

Speaking to the reporter, Richard Kenan said: “My boss, Njidda and I travelled to Numan to restock our provision for the Christmas and to buy some spare parts for the grinding engine which I operate.

“My boss gave me N20, 000.00 for the purchase of the spare parts while he went to buy items for the provision shop. After we had bought some of the goods and loaded them in a vehicle to Bille, we mounted out motorcycle and headed back to our village, Bille in Demsa Local Government Area.

“We had not left Numan, approaching the FRSC office, when suddenly an FRSC vehicle in high speed overtook us and immediately signalled us to turn into their office. We had to brake abruptly and almost collided with them. But somehow, we narrowly escaped hitting them.

“Surprisingly, the driver of their van, who was obviously at fault, in my opinion, was the one hurling insults at us. We simply just apologised and continued our journey.

“Shortly after that, we just heard the FRSC vehicle with siren speeding towards us. They soon caught up with us and knocked us off our bike. We hit the ground and became unconscious. By the time I woke up, I tried to stand up, but fell. So the people around us helped me to sit down.

“After regaining my composure, I asked where my boss was. But they said his condition was much worse than mine, and he had been taken to the hospital.

“Because I couldn’t walk, one of the good Samaritans volunteered his Keke (tricycle) and it was used to take me to the hospital.

“My boss had about N400, 000 on him when we had the accident. All the money, his two phones and all the spare parts I bought for the grinding engine were missing after I woke up. I had to go back home and inform them of what happened.”

Suleiman Umar, brother to the deceased, also ran the provision store. He narrated his family’s ordeal to the reporter. His words: “I was just returning from the mosque on December 20 when I met Richard at the front of my shop. His hands were not looking good from the injuries he sustained during the accident and he was limping and could not walk. He was the one that informed me that they were involved in an accident and had been knocked down by an FRSC vehicle.

“I quickly rushed him to the Primary Health Care facility at Bille for treatment and then rushed down to Numan General Hospital where I found my brother in a critical condition. I also met the road safety driver, one Alhaji Mohammed, who hit them. He was now in mufti and was taking responsibility for the medical bills of my brother at the Numan hospital.

“When I saw his condition, I quickly went to the hospital medical director and requested for permission to transfer the case to the specialist hospital, because they told me he required oxygen to breathe, but they didn’t have the facility and no one was really paying attention to him.

“On our way out of Numan, I realised he was lying too still, so we quickly turned to the hospital in Demsa, where they confirmed that he had already died.”

“We returned the corpse to Numan hospital mortuary and headed to the police station to file our complaints. I had my statement taken and the FRSC officer also wrote his statement. Richard also gave his account of what happened.

“What hurts in all of this is that, the FRSC officers are the ones that usually help in accident situations but after hitting my brother, they left him for dead and ran away. I believe if they had helped, he would have survived.

“He was knocked down with someone else, Richard, who was receiving treatment at a different facility but they did not care to find out what happened to him up till now. It was a day after his death that the police went and took a photograph of the corpse and invited us all to the police station, where we gave our statements.

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have kept mum and refused to take action. There has been no communication from the police referred to the police headquarters in Yola.

one of the wives is pregnant. We want the government to help us and get our rights back. The

Mohammed Abdulmumini, 50-year-old uncle to Njidda, also spoke. He said: “He is like a son to me. I brought him to my house as a small boy, sent him to Islamic school and later, I enrolled him in school for Western education and he went up to secondary school level. Luckily he started the provision business, which has been flourishing.

“He was the breadwinner of our family. He had two wives, and one of them is pregnant. He already had three children, and his parents are still alive. He was the one that was taking care of everyone. Then suddenly, everything stopped.

“We have been in dire situation since he died. The FRSC people were mean to us; they did not even come around to console the family over the irreparable loss.

“One of their bosses who attended the burial had assured us that the command would do something about it. But since then, we have not heard from anyone. And even the police have decided to keep mum over my ward’s death. It is unacceptable. That was why we approached a lawyer for help fight for our rights.”

The reporter gathered from documents made available by the legal counsel representing the family that a formal letter had been sent to the Adamawa State Commissioner of Police, while the Corps Marshal and the Assistant Inspector General of Police, zonal command, zone 3, Yola were copied. The letter was dated January 9, 2020, and it was duly acknowledged and stamped by the police headquarters on January 13, 2020. In spite of that, the family said no action has been taken.

A.Z. Kalone, the legal counsel representing the family of the deceased, told the reporter that his law office had filed a separate letter to the office of the Sector Commander, Federal Road Safety Corps, Yola, demanding immediate action on the officers responsible for the murder of Yusuf Njidda. He said he was yet to be briefed by the FRSC.

Kalone, in his submission on the case, had said he would rely on the briefing received from Fatima and Aishatu and relations of the deceased on the incident that led to his death.

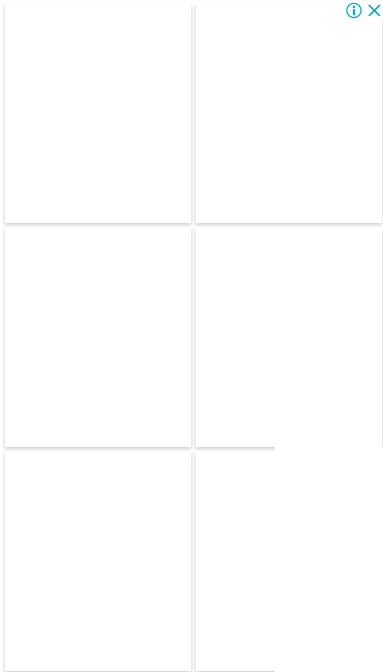
“On 20/12/2019, the deceased, their husband and brother, was murdered by the men of the Federal Road Safety Corps (who were five in number) along Numan-Jalingo highway over a trivial misunderstanding.

“In view of the above fact and development we hereby call on your good and esteemed office to order the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) to transfer the case file to your good office for investigation into the circumstances leading to the murder of the deceased by men of the FRSC, with a view to bringing the officers to book.”

Reacting to enquiries by the reporter, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) in Adamawa State, Suleiman Nguroje said: “We have received the letter, acknowledged it and have already acted upon it. The CP has already ordered the DPO to transfer the case file to the state CID for further investigation.

“There are always hundreds of this kind of letter, and all of them are sent to the appropriate departments for action. The DPO Numan confirmed to me that he has received the letter and all the complaints have been forwarded to the Central Motor Traffic Division, (MTD) where the case is being treated.

“The families and all persons involved would be invited in order to establish the case.”



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