

Mother battles son-in-law over defilement of 2 minors left behind by her dead daughter

■ Son-in-law vanishes with kids as case rages in court

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Olakunle Olafioye

Since Monday, June 3, this year, Queen Elizabeth Ilyomade has been crying and praying to wake up from her nightmare. A phone call she received in the evening of that day shattered her peace when the caller broke the news of an Okada accident at Ile Zik, near Ikeja, that took the life of her only daughter, Modupe. The deceased woman was married to Oluwaseun Olomo, 41, residing at Egbeda, Lagos.

The mother of the deceased rushed to the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital, LASUTH, Ikeja, but before she got there, Modupe had given up the ghost. Mrs Ilyomade was inconsolable and wept bitterly over the irreparable loss of her daughter. But that was just the beginning of her nightmare.

Modupe's death was mired in controversy, suspicion and intrigues, which eventually culminated in a case before Magistrate B.O. Osunsanmi in Ogba, Ikeja Magisterial District, Lagos.

Immediately after the burial, Ilyomade, Olomo's mother, contended that the children left behind by her daughter – Bola (not real name), 5, and Bolu (not real name), 2, – had to reside with her after the death of their mother, for proper care and attention.

But after few days with her, she started noticing certain strange behavioural patterns about the children and decided to carry out medical examination on them on July 5, 2019 at the General Hospital, Isolo.

While this was on, a "war" over the custody of the children began. "My opinion was that since Olomo, my son-in-law, who is an Uber driver, would not be available to take good care of the children, I felt it would be proper for me to have custody of the children for the meantime" she said.

But Olomo refused. Instead, he allegedly brought members of the Oodua People's Congress, OPC, to threaten his mother-in-law, and also petitioned the Police in Zone 2, Onikan, Lagos.

With the dispute spiraling, Iluyomade approached the Lagos State Office of Public Defender, OPD, concerning the health of the children, from where she was referred to the Mirabel Centre at the Lagos State College of Medicine, LASUTH, Ikeja.

Several tests conducted at Mirabel Centre later revealed that two-year-old Bolu had been penetrated severally and serially from her vagina and anus. It was also discovered that the five-year old boy, Bola had equally been penetrated through his anus.

According to the report signed by Dr Jideuche Onyememnam and his team on August 7, 2019, it was discovered that Bolu had an “apparently nominal female extended genital and there was a generalized hyperemia of genital mycoses and bruises on either sides of vestibule.”

The report further stated: “The hymen is obliterated with rough centered edges and there is easy visualization of the distal, posterior of the vaginal canal.

“The genital findings are in keeping with frequent blunt penetration/trauma to the vagina. The anal finding is in keeping with trauma to this region.”

In an interview, Onyememnam found out that the father was “described as being too eager for the clients to return to his house with him.”

After the test, Iluyomade said that the alarmed team advised her to bring the other child for examination too. The result of the examination conducted on Bola by Dr Alagbe Oyedeji, on August 17, 2019, was not less tragic. The team found out that there was a “reduced anal sphincter bone which revealed healed anal bruises globally.”

Oyedeji concluded that the anal examination findings on the patient client were consistent with repeated forceful, blunt penetration into his anus.

Armed with the medical report and the video evidence where the boy allegedly confessed that the act was done by their father, the OPD referred the matter to the Gender Unit of the Lagos State Police Command given that the matter had morphed into a criminal offence in which Olomo, the father of the children, was a prime suspect.

The confession and the suspicion, according to Iluyomade, were reinforced by the fact that the kids lived with their parents only; there was no house-help; the mother would leave early for work and the kids would be left with their father who was always at home.

The case, Iluyomade alleged, was subjected to a lot of manipulations at the Gender Unit before the then Commissioner of Police, Muazu Zubairu, ordered the IPO at the Gender Unit, Olakunle Orebe, to file “an action in court right away.”

Eventually, when the application for remand order was heard, Magistrate Osunsanmi granted the suspect bail, stating that “there was no sufficient evidence before her to link the suspect to the crime.”

The magistrate also held that the statement for the arrangement of the children filed by the respondent (Olomo) was more credible and acceptable to the court than that filed by the applicant (Iluyomade).

It also held that the independent investigative report from the Social Work Department showed that the respondent is a responsible man. The magistrate, therefore, ruled that Olomo be granted the custody of the children while Iluyomade was granted access and visitation right once a month.

Fresh controversy bursts

The judgment has, however, sparked fresh controversy as Mrs Iluyomade is suspecting a lot of foul play and, therefore, crying for justice.

Her words: “Upon inquiries made after the day’s proceedings, I discovered that the IPO Orebe, had altered evidence in his affidavit in support of the remand application, giving evidence contrary to the true facts he told the Commissioner of Police. Furthermore, he did not bring the video evidence to the attention of the honourable court, all which fuelled my suspicion that the IPO is bent on perverting justice in this case.”

So Iluyomade petitioned the Lagos Ministry of Justice “to take over and investigate the case involving the defilement, sodomy and abuse of the two minors.”

She also prayed the Ministry to “investigate the very suspicious and unclear circumstances of the death of my daughter on June 3, 2019, with a view to unravelling the truth.”

Iluyomade also wrote to the Inspector General of Police to investigate the threat to her life, allegedly by one Benedict Olomo, a Superintendent of Police and DPO of Ilasan Police Station.

She told Sunday Sun that on August 19, 2019, when the parties were invited to write their statements at the Lagos Police command, Benedict “suddenly emerged and threatened that he was going to kill me for smearing his family name in the mud ...and that he has the power and the means to do that.”

Since then, Iluyomade said she has been receiving strange calls repeatedly. Several months after her petition and several trips to the Ministry, she alleged that nothing had been done concerning the case.

But Kayode Oyekanmi, deputy director, Public Affairs, Lagos State Ministry of Justice, explained that the Ministry must have done something behind the scene, and advised Mrs Iluyomade to go back to the OPD for further action.

On the allegation against the police, the Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer, PPRO, Bala Elkanah, a deputy superintendent of police, explained that a case in court has gone beyond the police.

He added that Iluyomade’s petition against the alleged infraction by Olakunle Orebe and the claim of threat to life by Benedict Olomo should have been addressed to the Commissioner of Police, Lagos State, instead of the IGP.

“If the petition had been directed to the CP, I could have been in a position to monitor the people involved in the investigation and give an answer. You said the man involved is an SP; who is an SP before a CP?” Elkanah queried.

Frank Mba, the Force PRO in Abuja did not pick the calls made to him and did not respond to text messages sent to him.

All calls made to Orebe on 0816-397-4001 and his boss at the Gender Unit, Mrs Williams on 0802-300-7799, last week were not picked.

Another twist is that two weeks ago, when Mrs Iluyomade went to check the children as ordered by the court, she discovered that Olomo had vacated his Egbeda address with the children without telling Iluyomade, in defiance of the court order which granted her access to the children once a month. She also alleged that all calls made to his known phone numbers did not go through last week.

A disillusioned Mrs Iluyomade went back to OPD last week to relay her predicament, wondering why the body did not appeal the judgment of the Magistrate in the first instance.

Mahmud Taiwo Hassan, OPD's Head of Public Affairs advised the woman to come back to the centre with all her documents for possible fresh proceedings especially on what looked like a case of contempt of court.

A lawyer in the Centre also counselled that the next move would be to approach the court afresh.

With no concrete response from the OPD, she has approached her lawyer to file an appeal or a fresh charge of jumping bail against Olomo.

Meanwhile, Oluwaseun Olomo, the man at the centre of the storm declined to speak to our correspondent last week and instead referred him to his lawyer, J. Fadesere, Esq and Co, who insisted that his client had not run foul of the law.

According to him, the judgment was that Iluyomade must get the clearance from the Care Officer at Agege Local Government, who will call Olomo before Iluyomade can access the kids.

Iluyomade, however, countered that the instruction of the Magistrate was that she should only report to the Care Officer if Olomo denied her access. On the present abode of Olomo, Fadesere said, "he could not divulge such information."

But Mrs Grace Ketefe, executive director of the Cece Yara Child Advocacy Centre, that provides a child-friendly safe environment for children to disclose sexual abuse maintained that it is the culture of impunity that is fuelling the present growing cases of child molestation and defilement across the country.

She urged Iluyomade to go on appeal against the judgment at the magistrate court.

A distraught Iluyomade still believes she will get justice saying, "I cannot lose my daughter in very suspicious circumstances like that and now don't even know the whereabouts of my grandchildren after the facts on ground. It is sad. This is pure wickedness and crass injustice. Nigerians should come to my aid."

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