

① Another dies before testifying at panel

FIFTY-four year-old Basil Cheta, who filed petition against SARS at Lagos State Judicial panel has died few days before he could testify before the panel.

It was learnt that Cheta, who was 48 years when the incident happened, may have died on November 17, 2020 as a result of grave head injuries given to him by SARS operatives, which the hospital diagnosed to have caused him brain tumor over the period.

Testifying on behalf of late Cheta, his cousin, Vincent Chukwufulumanya, said the victim lost his memory and could not recollect things after police used gun butt to hit him on the head. According to him, the victim never regained himself but just managed anyhow until he passed on a few days ago.

He said: "SARS arrested him on his way back from work and took him to their office in Ikeja on May 24, 2014. He was beaten heavily; he lost his mind and could not recollect anything. He was diagnosed of having brain tumor. His legs were broken. He couldn't walk. He was taken to different hospitals. He was taken to El Shadai Hospital, Iyana School, Lagos and later to Igando General Hospital. His bill amounted to over

N1 million."

The panel was told that late Cheta, in 2017, filed a matter at Federal High Court, Lagos and won a N40 million judgement in April 2019 against SARS and that the money has not been paid till now.

The testifier begged the panel to help them enforce the judgment against the police. The matter was adjourned till December 4, 2020 for further hearing.

...Rivers panel to hear 171 petitions

From **Tony John**, Port Harcourt

RIVERS State Judicial Commission of Inquiry on the activities of defunct Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) said it has received 171 memoranda from members of the public.

Chairman of the Commission, Justice Chukwunye Uriri (retd), disclosed this yesterday, during the inaugural sitting of the inquiry.

He said the number was the highest to be received by a commission of inquiry in any state.