

# EndSARS: Police to exhume farmer's body, five years after death

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**P**olice in Ogun State yesterday said they would exhume the body of a farmer, Segun Elegbede, who died in police custody five years ago.

said it would exhume the body of the deceased for autopsy.

Policemen attached to the disbanded Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) allegedly killed Elegbede in their custody.

Elegbede was arrested by SARS personnel at his Ajibawo residence in October 2016 in an operation led by ASP Adeyemi Ganiu.

The police had accused the deceased of being one of those who "attacked the SARS operatives" when they visited

Ajibawo to arrest some suspected criminals in possession of firearms.

The wife of the deceased, Fatimo Elegbede, through her counsel, Femi Aina, had written several petitions to the police authorities in 2016 and 2017, seeking justice for her husband.

The petitions, it was learnt, prompted the office of the Inspector-General of Police to order the Ogun State Command to contact the family of the deceased for a post-mortem.

However, the police had released Elegbede's body to his nephew, Sunday Elegbede, who was said to have hurriedly buried the same without an autopsy.

In her persistence to get justice, the widow, a corn seller, filed a petition before the Ogun Judicial Panel on Police Brutality in November

2020, alleging, through her counsel, Aina of John & Co (UK) Lawyers, that the "SARS operatives killed" her husband and prevented her from getting justice.

However, in a letter dated March 9, 2021, and addressed to the widow, the command indicated that the body would be exhumed as part of the investigation process.

The letter, signed by CSP Olufemi Olabode reads: "This office is investigating a case of death in police custody involving the above-named deceased person (Segun Elegbede).

"In the course of investigation, the need to exhume the remains of the deceased person became the fact-in-issue.

"Consequently, you are requested to come and interview the DC/SCID Elewera, Abeokuta to finalise the arrangement for exhumation as requested, please."

Reacting yesterday, Aina recalled that he had in 2016 warned the police that Segun's body should not be buried without an autopsy, alleging that the officers released the corpse without his knowledge.

He said: "All those officers who shot Segun Elegbede dead must face prosecution. No one is above the law."

On her part, the widow said, "It is sad that five years after, police now want to prolong our anguish by exhuming my husband's body. How I wish they listened to our lawyer then....

"They took my husband alive, five days later he died in their custody. This is five years after they want me to come and see his skeleton. What a shame!"

The widow had requested a N20 million compensation for what she called the "unjust killing" of her husband.



SARS officials

## tle to Lagos community

Assistant Director, Advocacy, Communications, Social Mobilisation (ACSM), Malaria, Lagos State Ministry of Health, Mrs. Akintunde Ibrionke, stressed the importance of collective responsibilities at all levels; including community actors in reducing the scourge of malaria.

According to her, malaria has afflicted humanity since ancient times and continues to disturb nearly 50 per cent of the world's population.

Ibrionke added that malaria prevention must

go hand in hand with community participation.

She said: "In Lagos State, malaria accounts for more than 70 per cent of outpatients in the public health facilities. More than 700,000 malaria cases are reported annually; 657,154 patients with malaria were seen in both private and public health facilities in 2020. Malaria is prevalent in the vulnerable groups - children under five years and pregnant women where the infection can be profoundly more severe."