

My husband's killers are dying mysteriously, says widow of activist

•As police arrest two more cultists

Tobi Ayinde and
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Many people may not have known the late human rights activist, Mr. Vincent Olatunde.

He was however known to cultists, cyber criminals and policemen stationed at Somolu area of Lagos. He had a penchant for reporting any perceived ill in Somolu, before he was killed by cultists.

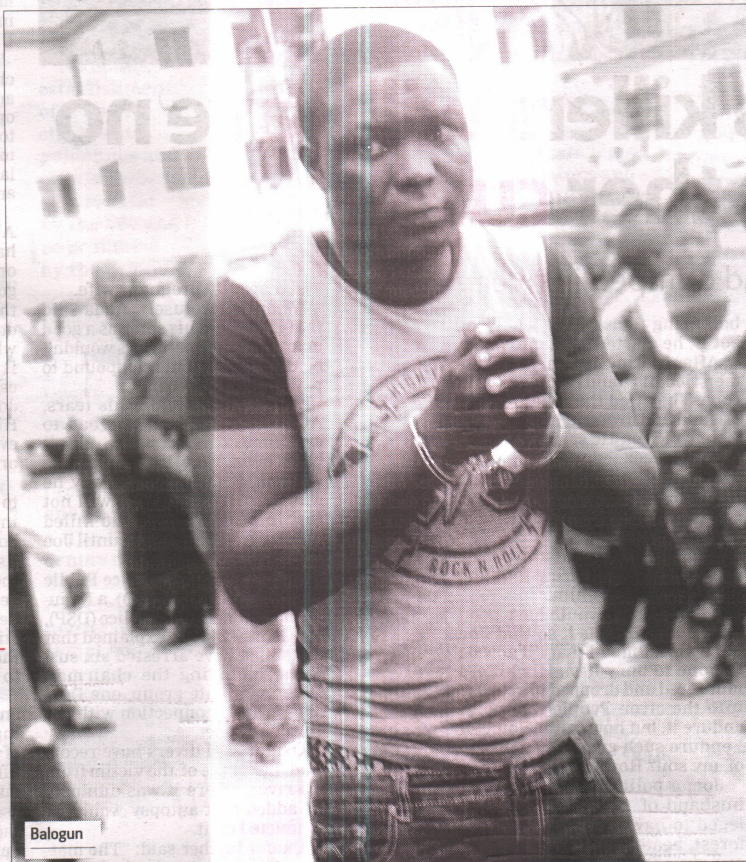
Three years after his murder, the Lagos Police State Command, last week, announced that his killer has been arrested.

The arrest of Ibrahim Balogun, alias Small Jepron, the alleged leader of Ejeje confraternity in Somolu, that killed Vincent, has made Mrs. Adetutu Olatunde, wife of the slain activist, to reveal the nightmare her life and those of her children has become.

Balogun was alleged to have murdered Vincent and four others at Shomolu. Vincent was attacked on October 1, 2013. He died, leaving his wife to bring up their children alone.

One would have expected Adetutu to jubilate over the arrest of Balogun, but instead, she lamented: "My children and I had gone through a lot since the death of my husband three years ago. Some of the cultists, who killed my husband, are still threatening to kill my children and I. They said we've been reporting them to the police."

The widow recalled an inci-



Balogun

dent that became imprinted in her memory. It happened in the area she and her children relocated, after Vincent died.

Adetutu said: "One day, I was outside with my children when some of the cult members came to our street. They came to see one of their friends, who just returned from London. Immediately they saw my children and I outside, they moved towards us and started threatening and cursing us."

Recollecting how her husband was killed, Adetutu said: "I still remember that day like it was yesterday. The day cultists shot my husband; I was outside, waiting for someone. I saw some young boys. They rode on five motorcycles. They positioned themselves in front

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I was in prison when he was shot. But I was part of those that planned the operation

of our former house. They were all dressed in black."

Adetutu said that when the cult boys arrived, they initially didn't recognise Vincent. She said someone, standing close to Vincent, fingered him.

She narrated: "Immediately they saw him, they brought out their guns and started shooting straight at him. He tried to run and defend himself, but they eventually shot him. They thought he was dead at that point and left him. We rushed him to Mainland General Hospital, Yaba, where X-ray was conducted on him. About 23 pellets were discovered on his arms. The medical doctors said they could not operate him, so that he would not die from blood shortage."

The family later relocated to another part of the metropolis for security purpose. Adetutu said the relocation became necessary after it was discovered that the cultists were frantically searching for Vincent, to ensure he was finally eliminated.

Adetutu said: "To my surprise, even when we were invited to the State Criminal Investigations Department (SCID), Panti, Yaba, some of the cultists, laid ambush for him. He escaped. Since then, I lost my respect for the police. I didn't know how the cultists got to know that my husband was going to the station that very day. Someone must have told them at the police station. Some of these cult boys had been arrested before, but we see them walking freely in the community after some days. Even this Balogun that was arrested will soon be released. They'll come back to start trailing and threatening my family. That's why I don't like speaking with journalists."

She said that the most painful event of her life was when Vincent died on her birthday. He died from the gunshot wound inflicted by the cultists.

She said: "But my children and I have accepted our fate and left judgment to God. My late husband's spirit fought hard for vengeance. Seven of the cultists that killed my husband have died mysteriously. Among them was the boy that shot him. I'm happy their leader has been arrested. Others should be arrested too, so that peace will return to Somolu community."

Vincent was standing in front of his house, on Craig Street, at about 1.30pm, on October 1, 2013, when about 15 cultists, who rode on motorcycles, attacked him.

The Lagos State Commissioner of Police (CP), Mr. Fatai Owoseni, said police have been on Balogun's trail over major cult clashes in Somolu.

Owoseni added: "Balogun, who is an ex-convict, was arrested on August 21, 2016, after terrorising Somolu with his gang. They have turned the community into a theatre of war."

Balogun said: "I joined cultism in 2009 after my best friend, Sunday Polorunsho, was killed by Ajele cult members. Immediately my friend was killed, the

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