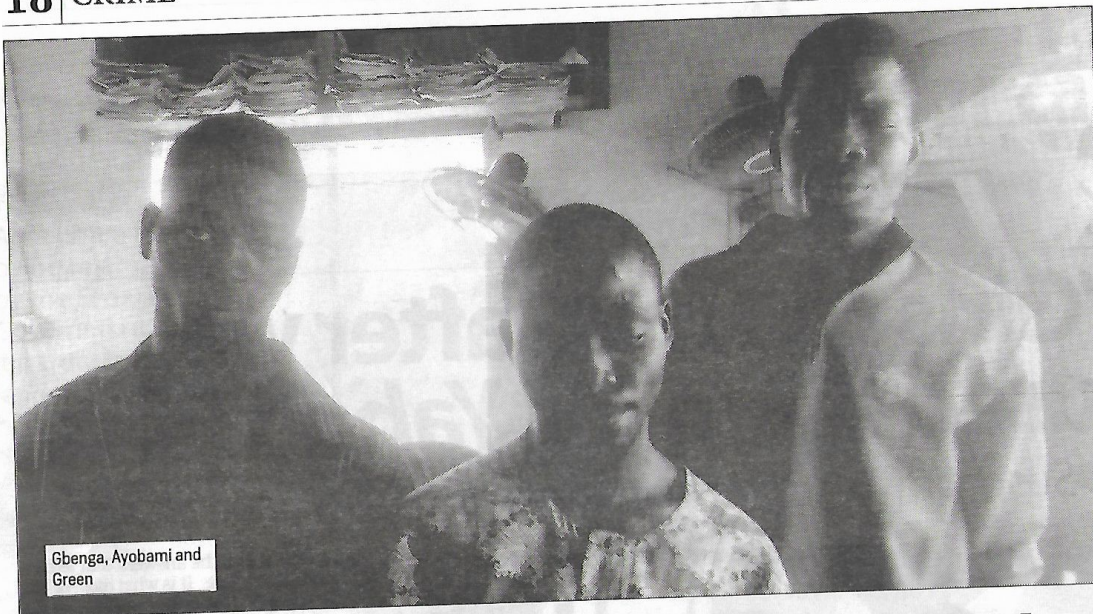


18 CRIME



Gbenga, Ayobami and Green

Man murders friend after losing N2,000 bet

Joy Anyim

Homicide detectives attached to the Lagos State Police Command have arrested a 23-year-old man, Matthew Gbenga, for allegedly killing his friend, Gabriel Boge (24), after he lost N2,000 bet at the Ifupe area of Ikorodu.

According to witnesses, the police also arrested Adekoya Ayobami (24)

and Sodiqe Green (22), who were parts of those playing gamble with the deceased and the suspect.

A police source said: "Our investigations revealed that Boge and his three friends were gambling and had put down N500 each. Boge won the game, which earned him N2,000. His three friends were unhappy for losing and picked up a fight with him. Gbenga stabbed Boge with a scissor and he started bleeding. He was rushed to the

hospital, but died."

Gbenga explained that the whole drama leading to fight and death was caused by Boge.

He said: "It was on a Saturday, eve of Oro celebration. We were all gathered at the community square. We were just gambling to while away the time before the festival begins. Four of us were playing the card game and we bet N500 each. Gabriel (Boge) won the game.

"I didn't have a problem with him

winning the game until he started mocking us. He disrespected us in the presence of other youths and that got us angry. He was even singing, which made it more painful. I stood up and pushed him. He also did the same. He asked me if I wanted to fight with him. I told him I wouldn't fight with him but I would beat him up.

"He ran to where stacks of empty bottles were kept, picked one, broke it and ran towards me; he stabbed me on the head. In self-defence, I picked a scissors closed to me and stabbed him on the neck. We were both bleeding; he lost consciousness. We rushed him to a private hospital, but it was too late. He was confirmed dead on arrival. I didn't kill him intentionally; I was only trying to defend myself too."

Ayobami denied being a part of those gambling. He claimed he had only gone out that evening to hang out with other friend, but was arrested by policemen from the Ifede Police Station. According to him, he had been falsely accused of being a party to Boge's murder.

He said: "Gabriel was my friend. I had absolutely no misunderstanding with him. While they were gambling, I was watching. I even tried to stop him from fighting with Matthew, but he refused."

The state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), ASP Olarinde Famous-Cole, did not pick his calls to confirm the incident. A text message was also sent him, but he was yet to respond as at the time of filing in this report.

Our correspondent, however, learnt that the suspects have been transferred to the State Criminal Investigations and Intelligent Department (SCIID) for further investigations.