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METRO AND CRIME

Naval men shot my husband, left him to die –Widow



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By Taiwo Jimoh [Twitter](#)



...says 'I can't cater for four children alone'

Residents of Ogunfeyinmi Island, Satellite Town in Oriade Local Council Development Area of Lagos State, have been plunged into mourning following the killing of a father of four, Mr. Godwin Gregory, allegedly by naval personnel.

Godwin, a musician, was allegedly shot by naval officers chasing some suspected oil thieves in the area. Godwin had been on the Island for over nine years. It was there he met his wife, married her and had four daughters.

Godwin lived with his wife and their four daughters in a single room apartment on the Island.

His distraught widow, Mrs. Bose Gregory, described her husband's death as quite shocking and traumatising.

Bose, a full time housewife, wept profusely.

"How do I cater for these four children? Since my husband died, we have been living from hand to mouth. We have been begging from friends and my family members to survive. Our



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children have dropped out of school,” she said.

Bose said Godwin was shot on September 11. On that fateful day, she was doing some laundries, while Godwin was inside the apartment, doing something else. Their second daughter then came crying, saying that she was hungry. Bose begged her husband to prepare food for the children since she was still busy with the laundries.

She said: “My husband stood up from where he was sitting and went with my first daughter to buy palm oil and kerosene. My husband gave the palm oil and the kerosene to my daughter to take home. When my daughter came home, I inquired about her father. She said he was discussing with someone. A few minutes later, I heard gunshots. I immediately grabbed my children and rushed into our apartment for safety. I was still inside when I heard a loud noise from outside. Someone was shouting that Godwin had been shot.”

When Bose heard that her husband had been shot, she rushed out in panic and asked to be taken to the scene of the incident. She said that her heart pounded in fear as she walked to the scene in something of a trance.

Bose added: “Before we got to the scene, a crowd had gathered. I saw my husband; he had been shot. He was on the ground, bleeding. I asked him what happened, he said that some naval personnel shot him because he refused to run, while they were passing. He said that other people ran, but he didn’t. They then shot him. My husband said he told them the thought of running never crossed his mind because he had not committed any crime. The naval personnel told my husband to call his family members to take him to hospital. They told him that it would be difficult for him to survive judging from the spot that the bullet hit him. At that point in his narration, my husband started crying, begging that we should take him to hospital.”

Youths and elders in the community mobilised, hired a speedboat and rushed Godwin to the mainland. He was first taken to a private hospital at Oto-Awori area, where the bullets were extracted from his leg.

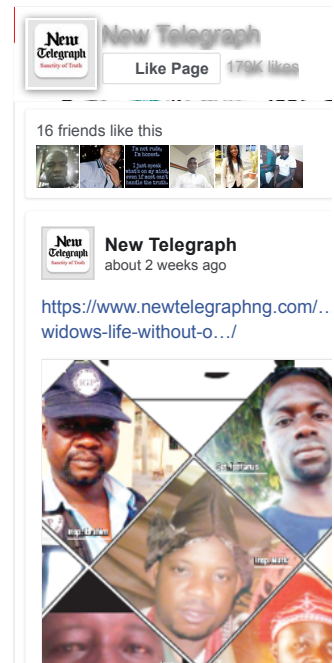
“While at the hospital, he was in continuous pains. I came home on Thursday to take care of my children. While at home, I called and spoke with him, to know about his health. We were still talking when he started crying, begging me to take care of our children, that he didn’t want to die. He was then referred to Badagry General Hospital. He died while being moved to the General Hospital. This is not the first time naval officers would come into the community to start shooting indiscriminately,” Bose said.

A resident on the Island, Mr. Kazeen Olalekan, who witnessed the incident, described Godwin’s death as unfortunate.

He said: “On the fateful day of the incident, he and I played a game of Ludo together. After the game, he left, saying that he was going home to attend to his children. Some hours after he had gone home, I also left for my house.

“I was close to my house when I saw four naval personnel and two other people in mufti. They were chasing some people. I quickly moved and hide in the bush. It was from my hiding that I heard gunshots. I knew someone had been shot. When I peeped, I saw the naval personnel talking to Godwin; they were asking him where the bullet hit him. Godwin raised his shirt and showed them where the bullet got him. I heard one of the naval personnel telling him to call his family members to take him to hospital for treatment.

“After that, the naval men abandoned him. I came out of my hideout and rushed to him. We then got a speedboat to take him to the mainland. Before we were able to get the speedboat, 30 minutes had gone. Godwin spent nine traumatising days in that hospital before he died. He died on the ninth day.



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“I was with him at the hospital; it was one of our community leaders that paid his medical bills. I don’t know how the children and his widow would cope. All we want is justice for him and his family members.”

Olalekan added that after Godwin was confirmed dead, community members deposited his remains at the Badagry Mortuary and went on social media to paste his picture, calling on anyone that recognised him to alert them or his family members.

He said: “Since he had been on the Island, we had not seen or met any member of his family. The only person we know with him is his wife and children. Anyone who knows his family should alert them about his death or alert us.”

A 78-year-old woman, Mrs. Janet Adekanbi, said that Godwin was very close to her and that she felt his death more than most people. She explained that on that fateful day that Godwin was killed, he had visited her shop to play a game of Ludo with her. While they were playing, his children came to call him, that he should come and prepare food for them. He left.

She said: “Immediately he left, I went inside the room to sleep. I was still sleeping when my granddaughter came to wake me, screaming that Godwin had been shot. I hurriedly stood up from where I sleeping. Godwin was a nice person. I knew him before he got married. Since he had been in this community, none of us knew his relatives. He used to tell us that his mother was an indigene of Lagos State, while his father is from Calabar, Cross River. Whenever his wife gave birth, we are the ones who used to mark the naming ceremony for him. In fact, even his church members have not come to pay condolence visit. We’re in a dilemma. His family members need to bury him.”

Godwin’s landlady, Mrs. Morayo Ariwayo, told our correspondent that the deceased was a gentleman to the core.

She said: “When he was shot, everyone tried to save his life. I don’t understand why those naval men decided to shoot and kill the young man. Godwin should not die in vain. Those that shot and killed him should be fished out.”

The Secretary of Ogunfeyinmi Island, Mr. Wole Olufeyinmi, disclosed that the first thing members of the community did was to report the matter to Ilashe Police Post, under Alakija Police Station, in order to prevent breakdown of law and order.

He said: “We tried our best to save his life. We took him to the hospital, but he died. What we are demanding now is justice for him and the family he left behind. We are appealing to the Inspector-General of Police, Muhammed Adamu, to launch investigation and find his killers.

“As I speak with you, there’s tension in the community. Many residents have moved out of the Island because of the naval people and their reckless shootings. We don’t know exactly where the naval men were coming from on that day. We are also appealing to the deceased’s family members to come forward so as to give him a proper burial.”

When contacted on the phone, the Western Naval Command Information Officer, Lieutenant Commander Ogar Otuji, said the community should write to the appropriate authority for proper investigation on the issue.

He said: “We cannot identify those who committed the crime because there are a lot of impersonators everywhere now. But with the petition to the authority, proper investigation would be conducted on the matter.”



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