

'IG's operatives killed our brother in custody, seized his corpse'

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May 22, 2020 Juliana Francis



A grieving wife, Blessing Bolarinwa, has urged the Inspector-General-of-Police, Mohammed Adamu, to investigate and fish out the policeman that killed her husband, Olaoluwa Bolarinwa, while he was in custody.

Olaoluwa, 47, a father of two, fondly called Laolu, was arrested on March 26th, 2020, in Ekotedo Iya Olobe, Ibadan, along with his nephew, Oreoluwa Abiona.

While Oreoluwa was granted bail after parting with N10, 000, the policemen continued to detain Olaoluwa. A few weeks after Olaoluwa's arrest, family members were shocked to hear that he was dead.

The suspect, an electrician, was said to have been arrested by policemen attached to the Inspector-General of Police Special Tactical Squad (IGPSTS), located at Itele area of Ayobo, Lagos State. The Unit is headed by a woman Police, an Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), Toyin Omosebi.

Distressed family members accused the operatives of torturing Olaoluwa to death. The accusation was made after the policemen attached to IGPSTS denied knowing Olaoluwa and then weeks later, told the family that he died three days after his arrest. The Unit has also allegedly refused to disclose how the suspect died.

Blessing recounted that the policemen stormed their compound on that fateful day asking for one 'Olu.' It was Olaoluwa that attended to them. He told them there was nobody called 'Olu,' that his own name was Laolu.

She said: "We suggested they should call the phone number of the 'Olu.' They saw a friend of mine and asked her the whereabouts of her husband, she replied that she was not married. They asked Olaoluwa, the owner of a particular shop there, he replied that it belonged to his wife. They started beating him. They went into our apartment and carried

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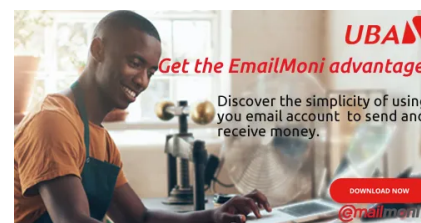
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two televisions and a decoder. They collected my phone, those of my child, friend and customer."

The following day, the Investigating Police Officer (IPO), Yomi a.k.a System Ijaya, called her to come and bail Oreoluwa. When she got there, she wanted to bail her husband, but System refused.

She said: "He told me that once they got the suspect they were looking for, they would release my husband. He told me that my husband had not committed any crime, only his friends. On Monday, my husband's people went to the station and discovered he had been moved."

The deceased's elder brother, Adeshina Boyo, said that he and his family members will not rest until IG's operatives tell them how Olaoluwa died in their custody.

Boyo explained that the most painful aspect of the whole drama was that when he finally met the woman in charge of the Unit, she told him that Olaoluwa was arrested for armed robbery. Boyo, who argued that there was no way Olaoluwa could have been involved in robbery, added that the deceased was not even taken to court before he was convicted and pronounced an armed robber.

Boyo said that more baffling was that the commander and her men refused to release Olaoluwa's remains for proper burial.

Boyo narrated: "They called my brother an armed robber even without taking him to court. Nigerians should stand up and fight for us. My brother's death is a case of extrajudicial killing. He was murdered! My brother was not a thief and neither was he an armed robber. My brother was a community leader in his community and everyone knew him."

Boyo explained that Olaoluwa and Oreoluwa were arrested and taken to Mokola Police Station in Ibadan, where Oreoluwa was released the following day after paying N10,000 for bail.

Boyo said that they later went to Mokola Police Station, thinking they could facilitate the release of Olaoluwa, but discovered he had been moved.

Boyo said: "It was from the incident register at Mokola Police Station, that we got to know that Olaoluwa and others were moved to Obada Police Station, which is some kilometres from Sango-Ota, Ogun State. The following Saturday, I went to Obada Police Station, where I was told that they didn't have such a person in their custody. We were directed to the Ogun State Criminal Intelligence and Investigations Department (SCIID), Elewera. When we got there, we were directed to IGPSTS Unit. With the help of my sister, an army officer, who had worked in Abuja, we found out that the policemen were truly from IGPSTS in Lagos."

Boyo and other family members remembered that when Oreoluwa was granted bail, the IPO gave him his phone number.

Boyo said: "We called the phone number and the Truecaller showed, 'System.' But immediately we asked him about Olaoluwa, he cut the call. Our brother-in-law at Defence House also called System; he asked us to meet him at Police Headquarters, Obalende, Lagos State. When we got to Obalende and called him, he told us that he was on his way to Abuja. He promised to call my brother-in-law, to give detail of the offence Olaoluwa committed. After that he stopped picking my brother-in-law's calls. One day, I called him and he picked, I asked him of my brother, he said that he was a tracker and arrested

Olaoluwa in order to use him to track some suspects. He promised that my brother would soon be released."

Boyo recollected: "After four weeks, I went to their office at Ayobo. The policemen we met there denied knowing any policeman called System. They also said there was no case of any Olaoluwa there. My sister and I went back the following week and met another policeman, who told us that all suspects and their IPOs had been moved to Abuja. He asked us to go home and wait until after the lockdown. We went back there the following week, making it six weeks that my brother had been arrested. When we got there, they quarrelled with us because we asked for their phone contacts. We just felt that rather than going there from Lagos Island every time, we should just call them to know when their commander would be around so that we could go there to see her. They had earlier told us that she had been on sickbed for four days."

Boyo continued his narration: "On Friday, I went back there with my sister. They brought out their register; I was behind the policeman that brought out the register. I noticed that the cases System alone was handling were many. Almost all the suspects had System Ijaya as their IPO. This was the same name that those policemen had repeatedly denied knowing. They asked me to call System; they spoke with him and then they allowed us to see the commander. The commander asked me if Olaoluwa had been arrested before, I said no. She asked me if I knew he was an armed robber, I told her it was not possible! Our family had sold sachet water, Kola nut, newspapers and other things in Ibadan to survive. Our family believes in handwork. I told her that we don't steal, let alone to do robbery."

The commander told them that said the suspects had confessed to arm robbery. She ordered that the suspects be brought out.

Boyo noted: "I thought they went to bring Olaoluwa, instead they brought out four guys. The first guy, who claimed to know Olaoluwa, said Olaoluwa was their financier and that he was in charge of providing guns for them during operations. I just looked at him. We pay Olaoluwa children's school fees. He had no money, nothing! When the suspect was asked how many times Olaoluwa had gone on operation with them, he paused. The commander shouted at him, he then said that they went to steal generator in a factory. I said wow that was not armed robbery if that truly happened. The commander told us that Olaoluwa died on the third day after his arrest. She and her men had forgotten that two weeks after Olaoluwa's arrest, they gave him phone to speak with his wife. They are now saying that he died three days after his arrest. We asked them to release his corpse to us, but the commander said that because Olaoluwa was an armed robber, they wouldn't release his corpse. The woman even said that she was not supposed to attend to us, that she was supposed to be at a meeting, and that people at the meeting had been calling her. She didn't give us opportunity to ask her how our brother died."

When our reporter contacted the Force Public Relations Officer (FPRO), Frank Mba, to know how Olaoluwa died in police custody and why his corpse had not been released to his family, he promised to get back to our reporter the following day. When he didn't fulfill his promise, our reporter called him again, but he didn't pick his calls, even as at the time of filing in this story.

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