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Metro & Crime

## Mystery: Man Disappears From Firm, Found Headless

A 39-year-old father of two, Kingsley Obot, recently went missing from his workplace in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. His disappearance threw the entire extended family members in turmoil. It led to a frantic search. But their hopes of seeing and reuniting with Kingsley were dashed when he was found. Days later, his body was found headless! The distraught family members have asked the Rivers State

Police Command to carry out a thorough investigation, with a view to uncovering how a young ablebodied man, who left home hale and hearty, was later found decapitated.

The family members are not, however, receiving the attention needed for the investigation as they alleged that police had asked them to jettison the investigation and collect monetary settlement from the company where Kingsley worked, disappeared and then found headless.

The victim's brother, Donald Obot, said Kingsley was last seen alive on the premises of Ellan Star Marine, a Port Harcourt-based company, where he worked. It was further alleged with the help of threats from operatives of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), the company brought out the head of Kingsley within the company's yard. Donald said that it had been discovered that a certain chemical was doused on the remains of the deceased, to speedy decomposition. He disclosed that Kingsley's wife, Mrs. Uduak Kingsley Obot, and two daughters had been plunged into unimaginable grief following the discovery of his headless body. Donald explained that Kingsley joined the company two months before his murder. He said: "My brother was beheaded within the company's premises.

His headless body was then thrown into the sea at Agbaraja, Woji, in Ohio/Akoor Local Government Area. When we visited the company after not hearing from him, they told us he was missing. They said he went out to drink after he had entered the company's premises.

They also said he did not return to the company after he went for the drink. But later that very day, they said he entered the sea and never came out. "That was quite contradictory to us. In fact, we found the whole thing strange. My brother was not the type that will abandon his duty post for a drink." Donald said that 30 minutes after he left the company's premises, confused and not knowing what to believe, a worker with the company called, saying that the sea had just washed up a headless body.

The worker urged Donald to hurry back in order to identify the body. When he got there, he identified the body as that of Kingsley. He added: "The mere sight of my brother confirmed to me that the company he worked for, which was supposed to protect him, knew something about his death, but went to great miles to cover it up. "Woji Police Station, where the company claimed to have reported the case, moved to the company and arrested some of the staff. The police also instructed the company to locate the head and attach it to the body.

After getting the head, the police officers at Woji Police Station accompanied me and the staff of Ellan Star Marine to the morgue where his body was deposited. "I noticed Woji Police Station had been compromised when the policemen started urging me to accept the company's monetary settlement and not bother about autopsy or investigations."

The following day, Woji Police Station granted bail to all the staff of the company. This compelled members of the family to contact a law firm, Paulinus James Idio & Co, which insisted the police and the company should find out who and what caused Kingsley's death.

The family members believe that Kingsley was targeted by strong forces. They also alleged that after his murder, those responsible went to great length to cover up the dastardly act so that nobody could be held accountable. When contacted, the Ellan Star Marine Manager, identified as Mr. Ajibola, said there was nothing else to talk about. Ajibola alleged that journalists, who had called Ellan Star Marine over the case, misrepresented and misquoted the company. He added: "There is nothing else to say. This is not the first time journalists have called me to comment on this issue.

I gave them the number of people to speak to only for them to publish what those people didn't say. Since you've heard from the people that complained, there is nothing else to say." When this reporter explained to him why he had to state the company's position in view of the allegation against it, he promised to text the number of another company's executive that could authoritatively speak on the issue. But as at press time, he was yet to do so. The state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), SP Nnamdi Omoni, said he was aware of the matter. He, however, disclosed that the matter was already being handled by homicide detectives at the SCIID.

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