

Apprentice trader found dead, 2 days after freedom

Taiwo Jimoh

Policemen attached to the Festac Town Division have discovered the body of a 26-year-old apprentice trader, Chijioke Nzube at 5th Avenue, Festac Town, Lagos.

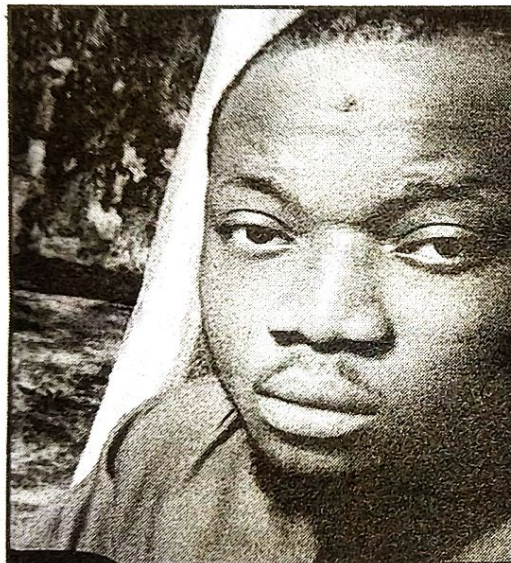
It was gathered that the deceased who trades on provisions has a store at Idumota, Lagos.

According to Mr. Chidi Nweze, a spokesperson for Ebute-Ero Market Union, Nzube has been unreachable since Sunday, Jan. 30 when his friends tried calling his phone.

Narrating how the body was found, Nweze said the search for Nzube intensified when he didn't show up at his store on Monday, Jan. 31 and his boss, one Mr. Chika Umofia had to be called.

"We kept searching for him and calling his number which wasn't still going so we tried contacting his boss, Mr. Umofia, but his lines weren't going through also. We later reached his son who came and we asked him about Nzube.

"He said they were also search-



The apprentice

ing for him. We asked if they had reported to the police, he said no. We then advised them to report to the police and that three market officials will also accompany him to the police station.

"The boy said no, that the family will go first then brief the market officials on the outcome of their findings."

"Later the boy started making enquiry about where Nzube lives. He said, 'Chijioke is no longer serving my father. He is now on his own,

he just got his own apartment and set to vacate our place. He was supposed to leave that place on Sunday when the incident happened. We all lived together at 4th Avenue, Festac.'

"After the boy was interviewed, he was asked to go and make entry with the police, he promised to go later; then brought out the key to the deceased's shop.

"He tried to open the shop, but he was challenged by the market people. We asked him how he got the keys and he said he has an interest in the shop. He said that is not our concern and we stopped him from opening the shop.

"We asked him to go and report at the police station that this shop or money is not important now. What is important is the life of this boy, let's know the situation of the boy, so he left."

Nweze said the market authority later decided to visit Festac Town to know what exactly happened, but later decided to visit the police station first, since the case hasn't been reported.

"We got to Festac Police Station

and met the DPO. We told him everything that happened and he asked if we have the picture. We said yes, we brought out the picture of the boy and showed him, the man shook his head.

"After shaking his head, he showed us the picture that was sent to him that a corpse had been dumped at 5th Avenue of Festac Town on Sunday night till Monday morning when it was recovered. Lo and behold, it was Chijioke's corpse."

The spokesperson added that all the market union wants is justice for the deceased whom he described as an only child with no one to fight for him.

A police source at Festac police division who pleaded anonymity however said that the case has been transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID), Panti and that three suspects have been arrested.

When contacted, the Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) CSP Adekunle Ajisebutu promised to get back to our correspondent.