

Human Extra

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The family of 27-year-old Victor

Eghaghe, a police officer who was mysteriously murdered on Sunday, September 4, 2011 and the Edo state police command are enmeshed in a controversy over the killing of the police officer. The deceased policeman was said to have been killed allegedly by a fellow police officer while on duty. The family of the deceased Victor, having waited for over two weeks from the police to name the suspect without success, embarked on a peaceful protest last Tuesday, calling on the police to make public the killers of the police officer. In a petition addressed to the Inspector General of Police, the family alleged that one Sergeant Folunsho shot the deceased, adding that the suspect also confessed at the Esigie police station that it was accidental discharge. The deceased family who were said to be miffed with the earlier claim by the authorities of the Esigie police station that Victor was shot dead during a gun battle with armed robbers, stormed the office of the Edo state Commissioner of Police, David Omojola, to express their doubts but the CP admonished them to be calm while the police investigates the matter.

However, elder brother of the decease, Eghaghe Austin, narrated the ugly incident to Saturday Vanguard: "On the 4th of September, that was the day I rested at home. I was expecting my younger brother Victor Eghaghe. At about 2:30pm, his friend came to my house and said he called my brother but it was somebody else that picked the phone to say that he was shot by armed robbers, that they rushed him to the hospital. We quickly rushed to the hospital but on getting there, they said he had been moved to the University of Benin Teaching Hospital (UBTH). By the time we got to UBTH, I told them that I am the elder brother to the police officer that was shot. That was how they informed me that he could not make it, that he is dead. So I went inside the ward to ask the nurses the whereabouts of my brother. They said they had taken the body away. So, I had to go back to Esigie Police station. On getting there, the DCO said he was just coming from a journey and that he learnt it was armed robbers that shot my brother. I told him

to give me policemen that will take me to the hospital but he said all his men were there already. But when I got there, I did not see any police officer. I went towards the mortuary and I saw my younger brother lying down on the stretcher. On a close observation, I noticed that it was a single bullet that hit him on the head. I shouted that this was not armed robbers' attack because if it was robbers he would have died with several bullets. So, I called members of my family. When we got there, we discovered that they had started stitching the head where the bullet entered and I started wondering that there was no order from the police to even

put him in the mortuary, the body was just lying outside. We now went back to the Police station where we met with the DPO, who also told us that it was armed robbery attack. We demanded that they should show us some members of his team so that we could know exactly what happened. They said one of the members was shot and was

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presently at the hospital. So I went to visit the man at the hospital. One Cyril who said he was also a member of the team told us that while they were parading, they suspected one Okada. So, my younger brother went to interrogate them but one of them opened fire on him. He said the other members tried to come out of the vehicle when one

sergeant was also shot and after that, the Okada zoomed off. I told them we needed to see the scene of the crime and they took us to Ekiosa by Lucky junction. When we got there, we asked people around that we learnt armed robbers killed a police officer in this place this afternoon. The people in the area told us there was nothing like that this afternoon. We examined the scene properly there was no blood stain of any sort on the ground. So we went back to the station and it was there that we discovered that the incident did not happen where they took us to. It happened along St Saviour, that was where they killed my brother. And it was a fellow police man that shot him. But why he was killed, we don't know. We learnt it was one Sergeant Folunsho that shot him."

Asked if he saw the other policeman who was said to have been shot too by the robbers, he narrated that, "that same night, we went back to the hospital and we asked the nurses what happened to the man. She told us the man is perfectly okay, that the policeman can even go home that day if he wants. But I noticed that there was no injury on him at all and it was last Wednesday that we learnt he was the one that shot my brother. And when we were invited at the state CID, I heard him telling the police that it was the bullet he shot that mistakenly met my brother. We also met the Commissioner of Police on the matter and he told us he will investigate."

Our demand

"We want the police to help us find out exactly why my brother was shot dead by a fellow officer. But the Sergeant Folunsho informed the police that it was accidental discharge so the police need to investigate this sergeant and tell us what exactly happened to my brother."

However, the Edo state Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Peter Ogboi, who confirmed the death of the Police officer, disclosed that some policemen are currently in police net over the matter. He assured that no stone will be left un-turned to unravel the cause of his death. "We have taken note of this protest. Even before they protested, the police had taken adequate step to find out what actually happened. In doing that, the Inspector General of Police has ordered that the case should be transfer to the state CID. So, the division has withdrawn its involvement in the investigation. The matter is now being handled by the State CID. As I talk to you now, some men are being questioned relating to the death. So I think the family should be patient, after all the man who died is a policeman. They should be able to distinguish between the person who died as a policeman and the man who died as a brother. It is equally a loss to the police. The matter is seriously being investigated and anybody involved will be dealt with accordingly. The Commissioner of Police is not taking it lightly and that is why we are appealing for patients so that the police can do a thorough job."



Controversy over the murder of 27 year -old -police officer



Victor Eghaghe, de

