

# Metro

## Bloody day at Ikorodu jetty: How 'Oyinbo' met his tragic end

By Bose Adelaja

**T**EARS flowed freely just as it was curses galore when sympathisers thronged the Bayeku/Oke-Ira Jetty in Ikorodu, area of Lagos State. The emotions were precipitated by the gruesome killing of a commercial boat operator in the area. The victim who was simply identified as "Oyinbo" or "Yellow" was shot at close range by persons suspected to be armed robbers who had robbed a bank and were escaping with their loot through the waterways.

The throng also heaped praise on the courageous boat operator who, despite the hot pursuit of the robbers, ensured that the boat berthed safely and all the 22 passengers on board, escaped unhurt. But for his bravery, the passengers might have drowned.

Oyinbo, who is said to be an indigene of Ilaje in Ondo State, was returning to Ikorodu when he ran into the robbers who were trying to escape in another hijacked boat. On sensing danger, Oyinbo, whose wife allegedly put to bed barely two months ago, decided to berth the boat in a nearby jetty. This decision paid off, as his assistant and all the passengers on board, escaped unhurt. The assistant boat operator was said to have also removed and hidden the hose of the boat before taking to his heels.

Vanguard Metro, VM, learnt that trouble started that fateful Monday morning when some unknown armed men, who wore charms, stormed the jetty in an old boat. Sources told VM that the men who arrived in the 22-seat boat around 9am, forcibly took over the jetty. Some boat operators who were not on duty, were mending their boats when the fierce-looking men arrived. They were said to be carrying cans of fuel and other luggage in their own boat.

VM further learnt that immediately they berthed, the robbers disembarked and went straight to inspect boats parked there. Their mission was to exchange the rickety boat they came in with a better one. As soon as they sighted one, they quickly transferred their luggage into it but to their chagrin, the boat had no fuel. This development must have upset them and they (robbers) had no alterna-



*\*Sympathisers at the jetty where Oyibo met his tragic end*

tive than to pick any other boat available to make their escape.

It was at this point that the boat operators raised an alarm which attracted residents and commuters to the jetty. Eye witnesses told VM that as the robbers were trying to escape with the boat they snatched, they sighted an oncoming boat which was incidentally driven by Oyinbo.

Sensing that it was better than the boat they had already snatched, the dare-devil robbers gave him a hot chase, prompting Yellow to berth at nearby jetty. But instead of escaping with other passengers, Oyinbo who was apparently unaware that his assistant had demobilised the boat, struggled with the assailants for its (boat's) possession. It was in the process that he was shot at close range and died on the spot.

When the Police failed to show up

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on time, residents of the area sent distress calls to 'Onyabo', a local vigilante group in Ikorodu. Although they swiftly responded to the call, they were unable to apprehend Oyinbo's killers apparently because they were ill-equipped. When sympathisers searched the boat which was left behind by the robbers, they found a bag filled with bullets and charms. These items were later taken to the police station in the area.

The incident grounded activities in the area, forcing intending boat passengers to look for alternative means of travelling.

Distraught residents of the area told VM that the thieves were coming from Ijede, Ikorodu where they had robbed a new generation bank. They allegedly escaped in an old boat, hence they diverted their journey to Bayeku in a bid to secure a better boat.

Reacting to the ugly incident, Chairman of Ifelodun Ferry Transport Association, Bayeku, Alhaji Lukman Ganiyu enjoined the government to provide adequate security in the area.

Similarly, the Baale (traditional ruler) of Bayeku, Chief Sau Aleje called on the government to empower the local vigilante group to complement the effort of the Nigeria Police Force.