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Controversy over death of housewife during police raid in Anambra

The circumstances that surrounded the mysterious death of a housewife, Mrs. Celia Okoye, in Nkpor, Idemili LGA, Anambra State during a police raid in their vicinity is raising dust. In fact, while members of the family of the victim are pointing accusing fingers at the police team from the Special Anti-Robbery Squad, SARS, who carried out the operation in a criminal hide-out around the area of complicity over the death, Police authorities are saying that a member of the family pushed the woman down during the pandemonium that ensued and she died, penultimate Sunday.

However, as at the time of filing this report, it was not yet clear whether it was the SARS operatives that pushed the woman down as they were chasing the criminals or whether it was the fleeing suspects that pushed her down which led to her instant death.

Accusations galore

Sources told *Crime Alert* that while the SARS operatives were accusing the fleeing suspects or even the woman's children of pushing

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Solomon Arase Inspector-General of Police

her down as they were trying to escape police arrest, relations to the woman said it was the police men that

committed the act. The other side of the report had it that the woman who was hypertensive had, on hearing the sound of gun and the rush into her compound by the police, ran into the advancing policemen who in the process, pushed her down. She slumped and died instantly.

How she died

Trouble was said to have started for the deceased when she returned from church service, last Sunday to rest but unknown to her, death was knocking on her door. The source stated that as she was resting, pandemonium erupted as people started running helter-skelter because of the sudden chase of suspected criminals in the

neighbourhood by the SARS operatives. Eyewitnesses said as people were running to different directions to avoid being arrested by the operatives, the woman was pushed in the process and she slumped and died instantly.

Police reacts

It was not ascertained whether some suspects were later arrested by the SARS operatives or not but the Ogidi Divisional Police Officer, Mr. Hassan Musa, said: "The son of the woman had just made a statement that her mother was pushed down by one of her own children as they were running away. Whoever said she was pushed by the SARS operatives is not saying the truth because the police did not even enter the compound let alone pushing the woman."

A source from the bereaved family confirmed as at the time of filing this report that the corpse of the woman had been deposited at the Immaculate Heart Hospital Morgue in Nkpor.

Govt should look into retirement benefits