

Two pipeline guards murdered, buried in shallow grave in Lagos

ON JULY 16, 2018 4:32 AMIN **CRIME ALERT**, **CRIME GUARD8 COMMENTS**

security firm accuses Navy of murder

* We only have two of their injured men- Navy

By Evelyn Usman

Two guards attached to Topline Security Company, a firm contracted by the Nigerian national Petroleum Corporation , to protect its Pipeline right of way in Lagos, have been murdered and buried in a shallow graves in Ilashe , near ATLAS COVE , in Lagos.

Vanguard gathered that the deceased : Bello Williams, popularly called Awilo and Oluwasegun Oluwafemi Olusanya, were hacked to death while on their way get sachet water from a boat that came to supply them water , at the bank of the river, last Wednesday.

The company, alleged that the killing was perpetrated by some naval personnel who stormed the Island in two speed boats , shooting sporadically.

Two other guards: Abayomi Ojugbele and Benedict Orume, who sustained bullet wounds, according to the security firm, were whisked away by Naval personnel , with their fate unknown.

Briefing journalists weekend, Topline Coordinator, Chief Joshua Aminu, gave identity of one of the naval personnel that led the team to the Island as Aminu Goni, whom he said was popularly called IOC (Officer in Charge) .

According to him, “ On the day of the incident, the company that usually supplied my men sachet water called to inform that they were coming with some bags of sachet water. I sent some of my boys to go and bring the bags to their tents. Our patrol team went to carry the bags of water when two speed boats of the Nigerian Navy stormed the area and started shooting indiscriminately.

“ My men ran for safety, from where I was contacted on phone about the situation. Immediately, I called the Officer in -charge of that area, Aminu Goni, to inform him of the incident, but he did not pick his calls. I also, called authorities of the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) to inform them of what had happened.

“ Goni (IOC) later called me to say that there was a misunderstanding between his men and my men. He told me that the situation was under control that two of my men that were injured were being taken to the hospital. He said it was a mistake on the part of the Navy.

“ When I contacted him again, he said that my injured men were responding to treatment. I requested to come see them but he said there was no need for that, as they would be discharged the next day (Thursday).

When I visited the scene , I discovered that Naval personnel during the invasion, shattered the windscreen of our patrol van with bullets . One of the bullets pierced through the driver’s seat and also deflated its four tyres. From all indication, it was not a mistake as claimed by Goni. When I called him to relate my findings, Goni said he would come and see me to settle the matter”.

Two corpses found

Aminu further stated that in continuation of search conducted round , to ascertain the level of damage done, two corpses of his men were found.

He said : “ The next morning, I went round the area with my men to further examine the level of damage done, only discover that one of our tents had its door opened in an unusual manner . Out of curiosity, I asked some of my men to check who was in the tent. In the course of the search, they found a dug hole where the dead body of Williams was buried. I insisted they searched further, in the process, they found a bag and cloths belonging another of my man, Olusanya, whose dead body was kept in a corner of the tent”

“ In shock , I called Goni to inform him that his men had killed two of my men and also told him about the recovered bodies . But he denied, saying that my men were still in the hospital . He however promised to come and see the dead bodies for himself but never did.

“ It was after I had contacted the Flag Officer Commanding, FOC Western Naval Command, Rear Admiral Sylvanus Abba , to inform him that his men threatened to come back, that some naval personnel visited to see things for themselves. But when they came, they said that the boys would have been involved in pipeline vandalism and met their water loo in the act.

” I called the attention of the Police to the murder. Some policemen from Area ‘L’ visited the scene and brought out the dead bodies . On closer observation, we saw that they were matcheted to death.

“ Since the incident, the Navy did not allow us see our men in their hospital. Goni claimed that the FOC said we shouldn’t come to see our men in the hospital.

It is also worthy to note that earlier this year, the Navy abducted four of our men: Aree Ibrahim, Olayinka David, Idowu Oni and Abayomi Williams”..

Aminu, said he had to order his men to leave the area, since their safety could no longer be guaranteed, following the latest invasion. He said that his men would only return back if they were allowed to carry light arms such as dane guns to protect themselves from vandals who usually stormed the area with sophisticated weapons.

However, the FOC, Western Naval Command, Rear Admiral Sylvanus Aba , exonerated his men from the murder , stating emphatically that naval personnel do not use cutlasses.

But he confirmed that two of the company’s injured guards were receiving treatment in the hospital, adding that they were engaged in pipeline vandalism.

According to Abba “ The persons killed were killed with machetes. What will the Navy be doing with machetes? The fact is that these so called guards engage in criminal activities. They claim they have not been paid for 15 months and they are still working, because they are siphoning fuel. They are even raping women in the villages and committing all forms of atrocities in that community. Go and investigate yourself

“ Two of their men are with us at the Navy hospital because we want to use them to give evidence. We had a meeting with management of Topline security in Abuja and it was resolved by all that no arms should be carried by their operatives again. If they are saying they want to carry arms, we are insisting that such arms should be licensed by the Police”, Abba said.