

# 4 Death of petrol station manager: **Family, mgt trade words over cause of death**

● *We suspect foul play—Family* ● *He was found in manhole gasping for breath—Proprietor*

By Festus Ahon & Ochuko Akuopha

**UGHELLI—FAMILY** of Mr Dennis Ikroje, manager of a filling station in Ughelli, Delta State found dead in the manhole of the station has alleged foul play in the demise of their brother.

Speaking with newsmen at the Ughelli Police 'A' Division, the brother of the deceased, Mr Blessing Ikroje, alleged that his brother might have been strangled and dumped in the manhole.

He said: "After his death, they did not call us to notify us and I suspect that they connived, killed the boy and put him in the manhole. I want the Inspector General of Police to come and fight for us, we need justice.

"My brother has been working in the petrol station for over three years now. I asked them if any family member was there and they said it was the police officer that signed to deposit his corpse at the mortuary."

**He was found in manhole gasping for breath—Proprietor**

Reacting to the development, the dealer of the petrol station, Chief Ovuoke Oshasha, said: "On that fateful day, I got a call that morning from one of the policemen because we have police coverage. One of the policemen called me that they found the manager of the filling station in the manhole.

"Immediately they called me, I told them to rush him to the hospital. We needed to save a life before asking what happened and I ordered that they take him to the hospital where the doctor confirmed that he was dead.

"Immediately, I sent my General Manager to the Ughelli 'A' Police station to report the issue. So, the division sent an IPO to the hospital, after confirming he was dead, the policeman took him to the mortuary before they came to the scene for the investigation.

"In the place, we have security

cameras and even if anything happened the CCTV would have captured everything. When they resumed in the morning, the first thing he ought to do was to put on the generator.

"I was even thinking, you know, when something happens we can see the cause of it on the camera. Later I was told that the camera and the generator were not on. So when the police got there, they discovered that there was a 25-litre gallon, a funnel and two inches galvanized pipe. They are all with the police as I speak to you now. That is what transpired, the matter is already with police."

Disclosing that the deceased was working as a pump attendant before he made him the manager last year, he said: "I was told the family members came to the station, they were aggrieved that 'their person was strangled' but it is the police that will do their investigation and unravel the cause of the death."

On allegations that he didn't contact the family after the incident, he said: "I don't even have the right to confirm somebody dead because I am not a doctor. Mind you, I was not there when it happened, I was thinking it will come from the police for us to now meet."