

## NEWS

## Family raise alarm over death of son in NDLEA custody

*The family of Kenneth Ayogu, 29, a patent medicine dealer at Narayi in Chikun LGA, Kaduna State is raising issues with officials of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, over the death of their son while under their custody.*

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By Emma Nnadozie, Crime Editor

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They are alleging that he was tortured to death inside their cell after he was arrested on October 13, 2022 for being in possession of pentazocine injection.

Spokesman for the family, Michael Ayogu, 50, a wine dealer also in Kaduna State lamented that even after his brother's death under their custody, all efforts the family was making for autopsy to be carried out have been thwarted by both the police and NDLEA.

Giving details of the ugly incident that led to the untimely death of his brother to reporters in Lagos, the wine dealer, who hails from Amahor-Uwenu, Okpuje in Nsukka LGA of Enugu State said the deceased was in his shop

# Vanguard

According to him, “on October 17, 2022, when we got news of his arrest, we went to inquire about the circumstances that led to his arrest only to be told that he died in their custody on October 16, 2022 and his body was deposited in the mortuary by men of NDLEA without even contacting any member of the family.

“When we applied to see the corpse in the mortuary, the officers refused us access with our cell phones to avoid taking photographs of the corpse but we observed that his face was covered with blood.

“We then petitioned through our lawyer, Casmir Ugwoke Esq to the Commissioner of Police in Kaduna State requesting for thorough investigation into the sudden death of our brother. We also called for autopsy to be conducted on the corpse to ascertain what led to his death but both the police and NDLEA have remained adamant to our pleas.

“So, we are confused and don’t know what to do or where to go further after losing the bread winner of our family in such a gruesome manner.”

## NDLEA reacts

In his reaction, the spokesman for NDLEA, Femi Babafemi stated that: “The late Kenneth was arrested along with his brother and a neighbour over drug offences. They were all in the same cell until he took ill. He was promptly taken to the hospital where he later died.

“If indeed he was tortured by anyone, his brother and neighbour, who were with him in the cell till the day he was taken to the hospital for treatment would have known. In all the meetings between the family and the state command of the agency with the brother in attendance, there was no issue of torture mentioned.

“The family requested for autopsy to be conducted to ascertain the cause of death and the process for that has been ongoing with correspondences between the family and the agency on the modalities for the autopsy. As such, there couldn’t be basis for non release of the corpse.”

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