

NDLEA operatives extra-judicially killed my 43-yr-old son, septuagenarian alleges

- Says they arrested his widow, demanded N3m for her release
- Our men didn't shoot, suspect drowned—NDLEA

By Evelyn Usman

LAGOS—A 79-year-old man, Pa Eyi Anderson, has raised the alarm over the extra-judicial killing of his 43-year-old son, Charles, by operatives of National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, at Canal Village, Lakeview Estate in the Amuwo area of Lagos.

The deceased, it was gathered, was into sales of marijuana and other hard drugs.

Vanguard learned that the NDLEA operatives stormed his abode on March 7, 2023 to effect his arrest, when the situation went awry.

Narrating how his son was allegedly killed, Pa Anderson said: "About 11 p.m., of March 7, 2023, my wife and I were outside receiving fresh air, when we saw a group of people marching towards my son's apartment. Three of them stood at his door post while others were smoking Indian hemp.

"All of a sudden, I heard a noise from my son's apartment. He ran out, they pursued him and shot him at the jetty by the building. He slumped and fell into the river. That was

when I knew they were NDLEA officials from their uniform. I could not go to struggle with them even though I am a retired military man, who fought during the civil war.

"At that point, I took my wife inside. For two hours, the NDLEA officials searched my son's apartment but found nothing incriminating. While they were leaving, they arrested Charles' wife and my other son, Dallas. They took them to Raji Rasaki Estate, where they parked their vehicles.

"But Dallas was released when they did not find anything on him, while they went away with Charles' wife. They detained her in their Gbagada office for two weeks and demanded N3 million for her release. But we ended up not paying a dime when they were told Charles was dead."

Bloated body

The Bayelsa State-born septuagenarian said after the NDLEA officials left his place, he waited till the next day for his son to come out of the river but he did not, until the third day when his bloated body was recovered.

He said he knew his son was into illicit

drug business and had cautioned him severally to stop.

He said: "He (Charles) sold Igbo (marijuana) and not cocaine. I was not happy with what he was doing and I told him severally to stop. Most times NDLEA officials would come, he would settle them. He used to give them between N150,000 and N2 million. Sometimes, they (operatives) would go away with his power generating set. At other times, they would go with him and later release him.

"I demand justice for my son. He did not deserve to die that way. They should have arrested him, charged him to court and make him face the consequences of his sin, lawfully, instead of killing him."

It was gathered that policemen from the Festac division, who were contacted when the body was found, came to evacuate it to the morgue.

Our men didn't shoot, suspect drowned —NDLEA

However, when NDLEA's Director, Media and Advocacy, Mr. Femi Babafemi, was contacted, he said the deceased was not shot by NDLEA operatives but that he drowned while trying to escape.

According to Babafemi, "the man has been arrested a number of times by the agency. The man had his house by the river side. During this last visit to effect his arrest, he tried to escape by jumping into the river.

"So, there was no incident of anybody shooting him dead. They didn't struggle much with him. They thought he had escaped. They arrested his wife, who was into the same business.

"Later, the family came up with the issue that they could not find the man. Obviously, the man drowned. The wife had to be granted administrative bail because of the incident. The man dived into the river to escape arrest and was not shot."

do court orders Amotekun, state rider N30m

dignity of the applicant.

The court added that the shooting, which led to the amputation of the applicant's leg was a flagrant violation of dignity of the victim, a sheer victimization and dehumanization.

The judge added that the said amount should be paid by the two respondents for exemplary and general damages to the applicant in order to cater for his physical and emotional injuries.

According to the court, the officers of the corps acted in flagrant abuse

of power.

The court said: "The illegal shooting at Araromi Street on August 9, 2021, in Akure by the Amotekun was a violation of the applicant's human right.

"The court hereby orders the respondents to jointly pay the sum of N20 million to the applicant as general damages and N10 million as exemplary damages."

The judge, however, rejected the prayer of the applicant's counsel, Mr. Tope Temokun, for the respondent to tender letter of apology to the applicant in a notable national newspaper.