Lagos police rape: Victim’s mother decries silence, stalled justice

Date: 2024-11-29

Source: https://punchng.com/lagos-police-rape-victims-mother-decries-silence-stalled-justice/

Mrs Aramide Olupona, the mother of a 17-year-old girl (name withheld) whom an Assistant Superintendent of Police allegedly raped, has accused the police of deliberately stalling the case to enable the suspect to retire in December.  
  
The incident reportedly occurred on June 29 at Ogudu Police Station, in Ojota, Lagos. An ASP, identified as Owolabi Akinlolu, allegedly summoned the 17-year-old secondary school student to the station, claiming they had apprehended the suspect who had stolen her phone two weeks prior.  
  
But the teenager told City Round that when she showed up at the police station, the senior officer reportedly invited her into his office, locked the door, and raped her.  
  
Mrs Olupona in July accused the police of trying to bury the case, adding that the suspect’s wife and the rest of his family had come to plead with her to drop the charges because Akinlolu would retire in December.  
  
After the story was published by Saturday PUNCH, the suspect was arrested and queried by the Lagos State Police Command who later disclosed it had concluded its investigation into the claims against 56-year-old Akinlolu, and forwarded it to the headquarters in Abuja.  
  
Meanwhile, Mrs Olupona, in a phone interview with City Round, accused the police of keeping mum on the case and planned to shield the suspect from a dismissal.  
  
She said, “Since August when they said they completed their investigation, the case has not been referred to the court. Now, I got some information from a police source that they want Owolabi to retire in December rather than be dismissed from the police force.  
  
“They plan to have him on trial next year after his retirement so he will still be taking his pension from the force. Is this not bad? That is why they have been silent about the case for the past three months. What message are they passing to my daughter who was defiled or even to other perpetrators out there? It’s unfair.”  
  
Reacting to the incident, the president of Women Arise for Change Initiative, Dr Joe Odumakin, decried the sexual violence against women and girls around the world and urged Mrs Olupona and her daughter not to give up the fight for justice.  
  
“The alleged police officer rapist is in prison, while prosecution is ongoing. Other complicit officers have been dealt with as well. One was sacked by the force, while the other was de-ranked from a sergeant to a corporal,” she added.  
  
In his reaction, the Chief Executive Officer of Gnosis Help Initiative, Olumide Omosebi, advised that the focus of the case should shift to the Nigeria Police Force in Abuja to ensure that the suspect faces an “orderly room trial.”  
  
The state Police Public Relations Officer, Benjamin Hundeyin, did not take the call made to his phone and did not respond to the text message requesting his comment as of the time of filing this report.