

Police recover 2018 murder file on Ggaba killings suspect

BY DAVID WALUGEMBE

KAMPALA. Barely seven years after the alleged murder of a one-and-a-half-year-old baby, the late Martin Freeman Kaaya, the Uganda Police say they have finally dusted off the file and intensified investigations.

It is alleged that on December 27, 2018, Mr Christopher Okello Onyum, 38, the prime suspect in the murder of four toddlers at Ggaba Early Childhood Development Programme in Kampala, strangled Ms Florence Nansamba's baby to death in Kwanja District, just days after Christmas.

According to the December 28, 2018 police post-mortem report and a medical certificate from Kwanja Health Centre IV, the late Martin Freeman Kaaya died due to hypoxia caused by strangulation and suffocation.

Ms Nansamba, a resident of Bwaise in Kampala City, said she had been in a marital relationship with Mr Asuman Onyum (Mr Okello's father) since 2012, but the relationship went downhill after Mr Okello allegedly killed Kaaya in 2018.

This publication has not been able to reach Mr Onyum for his side of the story since last week.

Ms Nansamba said for seven years, despite reporting the murder case to Aduku Police Station in Kwanja District, Kibuli CID headquarters, and Police Headquarters in Naguru, her attempts to get justice hit a brick wall.

"There is no police office I didn't reach; I even reached the extent of giving up," she said.

Police Spokesperson Kituu-



The late Martin Freeman Kaaya died due to hypoxia caused by strangulation and suffocation. PHOTO/ COURTESY

ma Rusoke confirmed yesterday that police have now recovered Ms Nansamba's file for further investigations.

"The [police] confirms there is a revisit of Florence's file in respect to the previous alleged murder with a view to holding the suspect on those specific allegations," Mr Kituuma said.

The State minister for Youth and Children Affairs, Mr Balaam Barugahara, also said investigations are back on track. "I wish to confirm that [the police] confirmed to me last week that Ms Nansamba's file has been received and that investigations are actively ongoing," he said at the weekend.

Tracing the file

Ms Nansamba explained that her file had been gathering dust; she went several times to Aduku Police Station, Kibuli, and Naguru, but updates were few and far between.

She was shaken after the recent murder of four toddlers at Ggaba Early Childhood Development Programme, recalling that Mr Okello had been

arrested in 2018, detained, but later slipped through the cracks, escaping from police custody and allegedly fleeing to the United States of America via the Busia border.

"I went to Kabalagala Police, then to Kibuli CID last week. They finally told me that my file has been recovered. I have wasted a lot of time and resources, and I have lost hope," Ms Nansamba said.

"I demand that my file be added to the other four cases Okello is facing for me to get justice. Because of the death of my loved one, I lost everything. I also wanted to kill myself at some time," she added.

Today, Ms Nansamba lives with an unending ache, not just from losing her son, but from what she believes was a failure of the system to stop a dangerous man in his tracks. She insisted that if police and the Judiciary had convicted Mr Okello in 2018, the four toddlers would not have met the same fate.

Mr Barugahara has said regular audits, performance reviews, and strict disciplinary measures must be enforced to ensure justice is not just a pipe dream.

"No one is above the law. The authorities will ensure that all relevant criminal procedures under the Criminal Procedure Code Act are followed to guarantee a fair and thorough investigation. Appropriate charges will be opened against the suspect, Okello, to hold him accountable for this heinous act," Mr Barugahara stated.

Under Uganda's Penal Code Act (Cap. 120), murder is a capital offence, and any person found guilty faces severe penalties, including life imprisonment.

