



TRUTH,
RECONCILIATION
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COMMISSION

THE GAMBIA

REPORT

VOLUME 4

**THE UNLAWFUL KILLING
OF OUSMAN KORO CEESAY
(FORMER MINISTER OF FINANCE AND TRADE)**

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HON. OUSMAN KORO CEESAY
(FORMER MINISTER OF FINANCE AND TRADE)**

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OVERVIEW

1. **Ousman Koro Ceesay (Koro)**, an economist, who was viewed by many as a man of high intelligence and integrity was appointed as Permanent Secretary Office of the Chairman of the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council (AFPRC) government in March 1995. Within a short period, he was appointed Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs and member of Council.
2. From the beginning **Koro's** family objected to him taking up a position with the AFPRC government and had advised him not to take the appointment noting that his strong character and the overt behaviours of the Junta were diametrically opposed. **Koro** thought otherwise and insisted that he could not decline such an offer to serve his country, especially during the crucial period of transition. It was time to rebuild the nation and the Junta's message of transforming The Gambia into a better place for all Gambians resonated with his vision for the country. Sadly, the fears of the family became a reality.
3. **Koro** was brutally murdered on June 24, 1995 barely three months after joining the AFPRC. After seeing the former Chairman **Yahya Jammeh** off at the Airport where he and his delegation were leaving for the 1995 African Union (AU) Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, **Koro** was never seen alive again. On the morning of June 25, 1995, **Koro's** charred remains were found inside his burnt official vehicle, under very suspicious circumstances in an isolated location near Jambur Village, Kombo South District, West Coast Region, The Gambia.
4. The discovery of **Koro's** charred remains sent shock waves not only within his family but throughout the whole nation. **Koro** was popular and loved by many and the news of his mysterious death caused great consternation particularly among the youths and the community in which he lived.
5. The death of **Koro** sparked rumours that the military Junta orchestrated and carried out his murder. This was done to silence him permanently because he was about to expose some unfavorable information about financial management by the Junta in the 1995/1996 Budget Speech. The Junta did not want this exposure as this would damage their public image.
6. His family believed this to be true for three reasons. First, he had confided in his mother that he was having problems with AFPRC Vice Chairman **Edward Singhatey**, who had threatened to kill him. Second, he had called the family to say that he would be coming home directly from the Airport for his daily visit and had ordered his favourite food for dinner. Third, to the best of their knowledge he had no connections in Jambur and had no reason to travel there that evening.
7. The failure of the Junta to investigate the murder of **Koro** even though he was a high profile government minister that died in service, gave credence to the rumours that he was murdered by the Junta. **Koro's** murder is one of the most gruesome high-profile crimes committed against a civilian in The Gambia during in the first year of **Yahya Jammeh's**

brutal dictatorship. Not only was he killed but his body was burnt beyond recognition to remove all traces of evidence. The state and position of the vehicle pointed to a purported accident.

8. **Koro's** family waited earnestly for twenty four (24) years yearning for justice to be done and for the perpetrators of his murder to be held to account. The TRRC gave them the opportunity through its public hearings to hear the truth as to Koro's murder. In 2014, both his parents died in grief without any knowledge of the circumstances surrounding their beloved son's death.
9. During its second, third and fourth three-week public hearing sessions which took place at the TRRC from February 11 to 28, 2019, March 11 to 28, 2019 and April 8 to 25, 2019, the Commission heard testimonies on the circumstances surrounding the death of former AFPRC Finance Minister **Ousman Koro Ceesay** in June 1995. His sister, former and current officers of the Gambian security forces, former government ministers and private individuals testified at the public hearings which enabled the Commission: to determine the circumstances surrounding his death, including the context, motives and perspectives which led to such a violation; who the actors were; whether such violation was the result of deliberate planning on the part of the State its organs or other groups and individuals and to determine what evidence had been destroyed by any person or persons to conceal the violation. Written statements and other open source materials were also examined for further information on this issue. The Commission also visited the site in Jambur where the 'accident' is reported to have taken place on Thursday, November 21, 2019 the last day of the TRRC's public hearings on the witch hunt in Jambur.

2 SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

A YA BAJEN CEESAY JAITEH (YA BAJEN)

10. **BAJEN CEESAY JAITEH (Bajen)**, younger sister of **Ousman Koro Ceesay (Koro)** testified at the public hearing of the TRRC via video link on April 17, 2019 from the USA. She was a nurse at the Children's Ward of the Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH) in Banjul when the incident happened. In an emotional but very calm and dignified manner she described who her brother was and how the only son and brother was cruelly taken away from them and the events prior to his killing and when he was killed. The non-action of the State and the reaction of the public and finally the impact that this had on the family.
11. **Koro** was born on March 10, 1962 and was the second of six children, and the only son of **Seni Sise and Fatoumatta Sagnia**. He was "a fine gentleman a combination of mum and dad, very loving, very disciplined, hard -working, humble, very smart, very welcoming and always smiling."¹ He had strong bonds with his family particularly his mother and was a role model to his siblings and the community. He believed in the transformational power of the youth and was an active participant in youth activities.

12. As a child the young **Koro** had lived in Brikama, Pakalinding and Dippakunda and did his primary education in Serekunda and his Secondary School in Gambia High School in Banjul² enabling him to see at firsthand what the developmental needs of the country were. This informed his choice of studies and he first went to Ghana where he graduated with a degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Legon, Ghana. He obtained a Masters in Economics from the University of New South Wales, Australia.
13. **After he completed his studies abroad, he worked briefly for the National Investment Board (NIB) and thereafter set up Quantum Associates with a group of friends. The IT Company was aimed at educating and updating the public on ICT and harnessing technology for development. The bright young entrepreneur was headhunted by the Junta and in March 1995, he was appointed 'Advisor' [sic] to the Chairman of the AFPRC and shortly thereafter was appointed Minister of Finance and Trade [Sic] and member of the AFPRC.**
14. **When he was approached by the Junta to work with them the family had deep reservations about the offer and tried to dissuade him from accepting it. Bajen in particular expressed her fears to him as she was 'skeptical about the military boys'. It was all about: "force, obey and don't complain and this was not Koro's personality." She knew that Koro would have a clash with the military boys. He assured her "don't worry it is for the country" and when she told him to be careful he again assured her "don't worry little sister I will."**³
15. *He accepted the position because he saw it as an opportunity to serve his nation and the Junta's stated agenda of transforming the country for The Gambian people resonated with his vision for the country.*
16. *Sometime around the end of May 1995, Koro informed his mother about an argument he had with the then Vice Chairman of the AFPRC, Cpt. Edward Singhatey and he threatened to kill him. Although Koro shrugged it off, it was serious enough for him to tell their mother, who believed that it was a grave threat to his life and urged him to resign. She told him that: "he was her only son and it was not worth his life." However, he responded that: "someone had to do the job he would not be victimised, threatened or intimidated." A few days later, Bajen received a note from her former husband, Cpt. Ebrima Kambi, a soldier who was one of the security detainees, detained at Mile II Prison. The note sent through a Prison Guard called Abdoulie Bojang (Jimmy) warned Koro to be very careful of Edward Singhatey as he was "very ruthless and dangerous." According to Bajen, Koro took the note from her: "he shredded it, threw it in the kitchen while she was cooking and warned me not to tell my mum as mum would be very worried for him."⁴ Bajen agreed to keep the note a secret even though she was very concerned about him. Koro on the other hand "did not show any emotion and told her not to worry about it. He just brushed it under the rug and said don't worry about it"⁵.*

² Koros parents both educationists worked in schools in these areas- Brikama in the West Coast and Pakalinding in the Lower Regions. His mother Fatoumatta had also served as a member of Parliament in the ousted Jawara regime.

³ Ibid 1 above

⁴ Ibid 1 above 18:06-19:01/1:44:17 accessed 11.11.2021

⁵ Ibid 1 above 19:46-19:57/1:44:17 accessed 11.11.2021

¹ [TRRC DAY 45 Pt1 17.04.2019 - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TRRC_DAY_45_Pt1_17.04.2019), Bajen Ceesay Jaiteh, 3:51-14:35/1:44:17

17. *The threat came at a time when Koro was working on the 1995/96 Budget Speech to which he devoted a lot of time and energy to write. He told Bajen that when he finished with the speech the family would be “very, very proud of him”. Although he did not reveal this to his family, speculation was rife that Koro was intent on exposing information about the military Junta spending money that was supposed to be for the Gambian people. Koro felt it was morally wrong for the Junta to “embezzle public funds, thus he was not going to ignore it.” Bajen testified that she heard their father asking their mum to advise Koro to be careful with the manner he approached this matter. He knew they could not stop him as he knew how principled, ethical and how dogmatic Koro could be, especially on issues he perceived as morally right⁶.*
18. **On Thursday, June 22, 1995, Koro visited his family home as usual. The tradition was that he would visit them every day as his mum had told him that no matter how busy he was he had to come home every day to see the family. On this particular evening their mum was out and their father had gone to Janjanbureh to visit his elder brother. She was the only one at home and they chatted for about thirty (30) minutes. When he left around eight (8) –eight thirty (8.30) p.m., he saw him off and he said to her: “tell mum that I will be back tomorrow but that tomorrow never came.”⁷**
19. **The next day Friday 23, June 1995 Koro called his mum around four (4:00) to four thirty (4:30) p.m., and told her that he was on his way to the Airport to see Chairman Jammeh off to Addis Ababa for the O.A.U summit, but he would come by immediately after seeing the Chairman off. He requested for his favourite dish ‘nan buru⁸’ and mangoes. “This was the last conversation that mum had with Koro”⁹. They waited for him until one (1:00) am, but he did not turn up. This was unusual as up to that day Koro came home every day. He was a man of his word and he always honoured his commitments. He had committed to coming home to the family daily and he kept his promise to his mum and never reneged on this. When he could not come he would call and let them know.¹⁰ When he did not turn up as promised, they assumed that the flight might have been delayed as it was raining, so they went to bed.**
20. On Saturday morning of 24, June 1995, they received numerous random calls enquiring about Koro. **The caller would hang up after being told that he was not in. It was very much business as usual for the family, as they were in the dark about what happened. It was not until around one thirty (1:30) pm that they got the devastating news that Koro was involved in an accident. They were having lunch when their mum’s younger sister, Maimuna, called and enquired about Koro. Their mother replied that Koro had not come home yesterday and she did not know where he was. That was when she told her sister that she had received a call informing her that Koro was involved in an accident around Brikama or Yundum. When she heard her mum repeat ‘accident!’ Bajen took the phone from her and asked her aunt to hang up.**

6 Testimony of Bajen Ceesay Jaiteh , 17th April 2019 , line 121-213
 7 Ibid 1 above 25:31-25:39/1:44:17 accessed 11.11.2021
 8 A sweet local dish made of rice, baobab, sugar and water.
 9 Ibid 1 above 27:19-27:24/1:44:17 accessed 11.11.2021
 10 Testimony of Bajen Ceesay Jaiteh , 17th April 2019 , line 217-259

21. As she worked at the RVH she was able to place a call to the Accident and Emergency Ward to make enquiries about whether they had admitted an accident victim. When she was told no, she asked to be transferred to the Intensive Care Unit. She asked the same question and was told that there was no accident victim admitted at the ward. she decided to call Brikama Police Station as she recalled that her aunt had mentioned that the accident had taken place around the Brikama and Yundum area. The Brikama call yielded no result. Finally when she called the **Yundum Police Station the person who picked up the phone confirmed that an accident had been reported involving a Black Mercedes Benz with registration number GG1322.** She asked “where is the victim?”, the person on the other end without knowing who the caller was replied: “the victim is dead he was burnt charred.” At that moment her heart almost stopped beating. She looked at her mother not knowing how to tell her that her only son had died.¹¹
22. **Before she could relay the news to her mother, her father’s younger brothers- uncle Morro and uncle Janko ran into her mother’s room and broke the news that Koro had died in a car accident. Upon hearing this their mum lost consciousness. It was a worrying situation.** She went into severe denial and her emotions were just numb. She was more worried about her mum’s health, because she kept losing consciousness. There was sheer pandemonium in the house. People were crying and wailing and some also fainted. She had to take care of them and her mother. One thought was uppermost in her mind was that they had lost Koro but she did not also want them to lose their mother¹².
23. **At this point in time they did not have any confirmation about the accident. They were praying that it would not be Koro. Thoughts crosses her mind that , “ It could have been Koro it could have been the driver. But to make a call and receive the information that the person that you are asking for is: “burnt beyond recognition. That is devastating¹³”.** The government had not contacted them even though the news had rapidly gone round the country that Koro Ceesay had died in a car accident. The family yearning for and looking for information and the government was silent.
24. **As news of Koro’s death spread, rumours started to spread that Koro had been murdered. The rumour circulating was that three individuals - Cpt. Edward Singhatey, his brother Cpt. Peter Singhatey, Cpt. Yankuba Touray had murdered Koro. In the days that followed, more detailed information emerged regarding the actual circumstances of Koro’s death. They heard that he was hit with a baseball bat inside Cpt. Yankuba Touray’s house at Kerr Serign, and his body was driven in his official car to the outskirts of Jambur, then set on fire. It was suggested that Cpt. Peter Singhatey sustained a burn on his arm in the process.¹⁴ She did not see Peter but she was made to understand that his hand was bandaged.**
25. **She spent the whole of Saturday with her mum but on the afternoon of Sunday June 20, 1995, she her aunts and uncles and cousin Dr. Sanna Ceesay went to the mortuary at RVH to see the charred remains of Koro. They had difficulty gaining access because the**

11 Ibid 1 above 30:00-33:43/1:44:17 accessed 11.11.2021
 12 Ibid 1 above 33:53-56/1:44:17 accessed 11.11.2021
 13 Ibid 1 above 38:02-41:02/1:44:17 accessed 11.11.2021
 14 Testimony of Bajen Ceesay Jaiteh , 17th April 2019 , line 314-365

mortuary attendant told them that Koro’s father had given instructions that no one was allowed to have access to see the body. She did not know who gave the instruction but it was definitely not her father. He was not even around by then to give such instructions. She managed to convince him that she was Koro’s younger sister and that she worked at the RVH. He opened the door but held onto the handle and blocked it. People outside (a huge crowd had gathered outside the mortuary) tried to persuade them not to go in and to respect the instructions of Koro’s father. She told them ‘my dad is not here.’ kicked the door and walked in.

26. **Accordin to the witness, they claimed was the remains of Koro** , saying “I have no way to say that was my brother. When we walked inside the mortuary on a concrete slab, there lay a torso, a human torso, from the neck to the waist that was charred beyond recognition. All you could recognise was the rib cages----- At some point she did not think that this was human because there was no head, there were no limbs. And in one corner there was an empty bag of rice. They told us that it was the skull of **Koro** that was in it. So I went over and looked inside of it, it did not look like a human skull to me at all. So we left.”¹⁵
27. **Bajen further told the Commission that when they visited the site of the accident, they found the vehicle had already been removed but there were pieces of charred metals, wood and other items. She found a piece of bone that resembled a broken ribcage which she picked up and took home to her mum. She said her mum cried a lot however: “she said at least I have something of my boy.”**
28. Late that same evening, a delegation claiming to be from the government came over to the house requesting to give **Koro** a State funeral. That was the first time the government reached out to them. The family declined the offer as they felt insulted and mocked by this request because “the government never had the courtesy and decency to formally inform the family immediately after the incident happened, given that her brother was a Cabinet Minister, and he died under suspicious circumstances”¹⁶.
29. Monday, June 26, 1995 the day of **Koro’s funeral was a very tough day. Before leaving, her mum had given her the traditional woven cloth that her father (Koro’s grandfather) had given her when she was getting married. She wanted them to drape it over Koro’s coffin and it meant a lot to her that this was done. The family first went to the mortuary to pray for Koro’s soul. She put her hands over him and prayed. Even though she was not sure that it was her brother .She did not want to lose the chance of saying goodbye and of telling him how much they loved him and would miss him. After Koro’s remains were placed in the coffin she draped the cloth that her mother had given her over the Coffin. The government officials present wanted to place The Gambian flag first but she insisted on her mother’s cloth being placed on the coffin before the flag. It was significant however that the flag was placed on top of Koro’s coffin. He was a son of The Gambia. He worked for The Gambia and the flag personified everything that Koro stood for.**

¹⁵ Ibid 1 above 44:39-46:50/1:44:17 accessed 11.11.2021
¹⁶ Testimony of Bajen Ceesay Jaiteh , 17th April 2019 , line 415-445

30. The “Janazaa” (Muslim funeral prayer) were performed at the Dippakunda Mosque. The Imam led the prayers but when it came to lifting the coffin the angry youths who already believed that the Junta were responsible for the death of **Koro would not allow the military personnel present to go near or touch Koro’s coffin.**
31. After the burial, **Cpt. Edward Singhatey, Cpt. Yankuba Touray** and other dignitaries of the AFPRC Government visited **Koro’s family to extend their condolences. Edward Singhatey approached her mother, extended his hands and said “Accept my sympathy Ma”. Her mother said to him, “You have some nerve to come here and extend your condolences after you killed my son.” Edward did not respond but placed an envelope next to her mum which she believed contained money. Her mother grabbed the envelope, threw it towards the entourage, looked straight into his eyes, and told him, “Just like Julius Caesar’s spirit came back to haunt the people that killed him, Koro’s spirit will haunt each and every one of you.” Edward quickly, stood up and walked away, followed by his entourage. People started screaming at them bye, bye, ‘mofala” (meaning killers in the Mandinka language)**¹⁷.
32. After about week or thereabout, **Chairman Yahya Jammeh** came to their house to offer his condolences. He was accompanied by **Lamin Kaba Bajo** and some other Council members. **Jammeh promised the family that he would make sure that: “no stone was left unturned in ensuring that justice was served for Koro’s murder”. This gave the family some hope, even though some were highly skeptical because they suspected the Junta as the ones being behind Koro’s murder. She recalled her maternal aunt Musu saying, “How would you expect the killers to do justice”?**
33. After **Jammeh’s** visit, no information was received about investigations into **Koro’s death. Several weeks passed without any information.** She secured an appointment to meet **Yahya Jammeh** in August 1995, which was the day after **Koro’s Forty Days Charity. She was accompanied by her aunt Isatou. While waiting to see Yahya Jammeh, Edward Singhatey** walked towards them to greet them but they did not respond to him, so he walked away. He came towards them at least twice but he did not say anything. Later, **Lamin Kaba Bajo escorted them into Chairman Jammeh’s Office. After the greetings she told them that she was supposed to come with her parents but they thought it best to wait for another time, that was why her aunt accompanied her. She then asked Bayo , “why did you guys kill Koro?” He looked at her and said: “we did not do that. We suspect the Jawara regime.” She looked at him and said: “why would the Jawara regime do that. What connection has Koro to do with them and why would they want Koro dead?” He did not respond to that question. The witness indicated that she did not know why they said so but it was probably a cover up. When she asked, “why you guys did not came to the charity yesterday?” He looked at her in surprise and asked if the forty day charity was yesterday. She retorted: at the house you told us that **Koro** was your friend. Yet you could not recall your friends forty day charity. What an awesome friend you are”. He then asked: “are you the nurse?” She replied yes. He responded that he heard she was very stubborn. He never answered the question. Then her aunt asked him what **Koro’s** vehicle was doing at Jambur when he had gone to the Airport to see him off. He did not answer that question either¹⁸.**

¹⁷ Testimony of Bajen Ceesay Jaiteh , 17th April 2019 451-510
¹⁸ Ibid 1: 1.10.27- 1:12:56/1:44:17 accessed 11.11.2021

34. At this point Jammeh called Kaba Bajo to bring a bag from under his table. He pulled some bundles of cash out of the bag and gave it to them as his contribution to the charity. She told him that they were not there for the money but they were there to get an update on the investigations. She did not want to take the money but her aunt being diplomatic, persuaded her to accept the money because it was for charity. At the back of her mind she knew they would get in trouble for taking the money once they got home. Before she left she told Yahya Jammeh to call her parents and update them about the investigations. He promised that he would. When they got home, her parents were furious that they accepted the money and wanted them to return it, but eventually, the elders convinced them to give it out to charity.
35. **The witness stated that Jammeh never called to give them the updates, and her mum was like a ticking bomb during that period. She did not want to see or talk to the Junta members. She told Yahya Jammeh that they had no shame and let them not call the family again. She told her mum that she had over-reacted and should give them a chance to explain. After a fortnight she called Jammeh and convinced him to call again. He did. The reaction was the same. Their mum told him never to call the family again from that day he stopped all contact.**
36. The death of Koro death had a tremendous impact on the whole family. The witness told the Commission that when Koro died, they lost their mum. Her mum could not handle the situation. **Koro was not only her only son but her confidante and cheer leader. They had a very special bond.** *“She was around physically but emotionally she was gone”. The elders met and decided that it was best if she change environment. She left The Gambia to go and stay with her younger brother Modou in Michigan in the USA. Her father tried to be strong for the family, especially his wife. However, on several occasions she saw him in the early hours of the morning standing in front of Koro’s picture, crying. The family left one by one, relocating to the USA.*
37. It was not easy but with the help of the Almighty Allah and the support of some very good people who had come their way and their love for one another, they are where they are today. **Koro** left a mark on their lives by urging them to go out and make a difference. Nineteen years after the death **Koro’s** at the age of thirty three (33), his parents died yearning for justice for their son. Their father died on April 13, 2014 and their mother just two months after on June 4, 2014 always hoping that: *“maybe someday Koro will come home. Maybe someday.” He never did.*¹⁹

B. ALAGIE KANYI (KANYI)

38. **Alhagie Kanyi testified to the Commission on February 28, 2019 that in 1995, he was a Sergeant (Sgt.) in the Gambia National Army attached at the Bravo Company and posted at the Training School under the command of Cpt. Peter Singhatey.**

39. **He told the Commission that one evening, during that period at about five (5:00) – six (6:00) pm, he was picked up from his home in Brikama by Staff Sgt. BK Jatta and Tumbul Tamba (deceased). After which they went to pick up Pa Alieu Gomez in the Serekunda area and thereafter they went to Edward Singhatey’s official residence at Cape Point Bakau. Upon their arrival at the residence, they were briefed by Edward Singhatey in the presence of Cpt. Peter Singhatey (Edward’s brother) that: “Ok, you are here. We are going to get rid of one fucking cunt.” But he did not tell them who the “cunt” was. They were not armed, but he knew they were going on an operation**²⁰.
40. **Peter Singhatey instructed B.K. Jatta to take them to Yankuba Touray’s house. Edward Singhatey went into his car and led the way, followed by four of them in another vehicle and then Peter Singhatey in his own car. He did not know the location of Yankuba’s house but it was around Senegambia. They arrived at Yankuba Touray’s house around seven (7:00) pm to eight (8:00) pm. Edward Singhatey asked them to wait while he went to the Airport to see Chairman Jammeh off. Edward further informed them that he would return from the Airport with a Minister and he Kanyi was instructed to receive the Minister at the gate upon arrival and escort him inside the house. Peter Singhatey was not present at that point and Yankuba, his family and his guard were not there either. There was no one at the house. Edward Singhatey left around eight (8:00) to nine (9:00) p.m and the rest of them remained at Yankuba’s house.**²¹
41. He was positioned at the gate, and Tamba or Gomez was stationed inside the house but were moving in and out anxiously not knowing what was going to happen. After some time, **Peter Singhatey** was the first to arrive. He parked his car outside, rushed inside the house saying, *“They are coming”*. He entered the house and hid somewhere. After about five minutes, **Edward Singhatey** and **Yankuba Touray** arrived with a civilian whom they introduced as the “Minister”. He saluted the “Minister” shook his hand and said to him, welcome sir. He later learnt that individual was **Ousman Koro Ceesay**. He stated, *“Edward led the way into the house. He (Kanyi) followed him and the Minister was following me coming inside the house and as we are entering I just hear the noise ‘veep, veep’ twice and the man fall down. A surprise attack at the back. I also take a step forward and that is the time Edward turn to me that “is the guy”. There was like what they used to pound pepper in the local language ‘Kouda kaniturang’ (pestle) that is what Edu take and hit him and hit him and hit him for the third stroke. Everywhere was blood and near him there was a firewood stick which he pick and give it to me for me also to hit. I also hit, then Yankuba took the stick from Peter and he also hit and he call the rest of the people, we all hit, the man die.”*²²
42. **Kanyi** narrated that he did not know why they were required to hit as the man was already dead. He told the Commission, *“my understanding, he just want to implicate us because after the three struck the place was full of blood, this man was already dead why giving us again and order us to beat him again when he is already dead”*²³ **Kanyi** confirmed that **Peter Singhatey** first struck **Koro**, then **Edward Singhatey**, then **Yankuba Touray** and all of them including **BK Jatta, Tumbul Tamba** and **Pa Alieu Gomez** all took turns to hit **Koro**

19 Testimony of Bajen Ceesay Jaiteh , 17th April 2019 , line 535-710

20 TRRC DAY 26 Pt2 28.02.2019 - YouTube Alhagie Kanyi 17.29-/1.30.47 accessed 11.11.2021

21 Ibid 19 above. 26:07-33:08/1.30.47 accessed 11.11.2021

22 Testimony of Alagie Kanyi , 28th February, 2019 line, 892- 1083

23 Ibid 19 above. 36:25-37:18/1.30.47 accessed 11.11.2021

as directed by **Edward Singhaty**²⁴. **Kanyi** further told the Commission the four of them –**himself, Tumbul Tamba, BK Jatta and Pa Alieu Gomez** carried the dead body of **Koro** outside the house and put him in his official Mercedes Benz car. He returned to clean up the blood from the house while **Edward Singhaty, Peter Singhaty** and **Yankuba Touray** left with **Koro’s** body, but he did not know where they went to and he never saw the body again²⁵.

43. **Kanyi** testified that he did not know where the weapons they used came from (i.e. firewood and pestle).²⁶ He suggested that either **Peter Singhaty** or **Edward** or the owner of the place knew exactly what was going to happen and had placed them there in preparation of the murder. He confirmed that it was pre-arranged. The witness confirmed that **Yankuba Touray** was present throughout and that it would be a blatant lie if there was any suggestion that **Yankuba** was not present or that he did not participate in the killing. **Kanyi** told the Commission that after **Koro’s** murder, he heard that an official car summersaulted and burned to ashes with someone inside it around Jambur the day after the killing. He suspected that it could be **Koro** because he saw **Peter Singhaty**, with a burned hand which was visible anytime he rolled up his sleeves. By then, he **Kanyi** was an instructor at the Army Training School and he saw Peter daily.²⁷
44. **Kanyi** stated sometime later, he was summoned to **Edward Singhaty’s** residence along with **BK Jatta** and **Pa Alieu Gomez** for a debriefing in the presence of **Peter Singhaty**. **Yankuba Touray** and **Tumbul Tamba** were absent that day. **Edward Singhaty** commended them by saying, “*Ok, end of the exercise, job well done*”. “*So as soldiers this is what is expected, when you are called, you respond and you were given an instruction, you execute it*”. **Edward** further said to them, “*Let us keep it secret, I know you people can keep secret*” and since then, he did not discuss the issue with anyone in the army.²⁸
45. **Alhagie Kanyi** informed the Commission that he was so traumatized after participating in the killing of **Koro** that he took to alcohol to make him forget the incident. He eventually left the army as he felt used by the Junta to kill innocent people which was not why he joined the army. He expressed regret and remorse for participating in the murder of **Koro** and the November 11 victims and described himself as a “*dead man walking*”²⁹.
46. He claimed that when the TRRC started its investigations, **Yankuba Touray** and **Fatoumatta Jahumpa-Ceesay** called him on different occasions and urged him not to disclose any information about the murder of **Koro Ceesay** to the Commission but he declined their request³⁰.

24 Ibid 19 above. 37:31-37:18/1.30.47 accessed 11.11.2021

25 Ibid 19 above. 38:31-39:07/1.30.47 accessed 11.11.2021

26 Ibid 19 above. 39:26-40:11/1.30.47 accessed 11.11.2021

27 Testimony of Alagie Kanyi , 28th February, 2019 line 1091-1222

28 Testimony of Alagie Kanyi , 28th February, 2019 line 1226-1265

29 Testimony of Alagie Kanyi , 28th February, 2019 line 1267-1299

30 Testimony of Alagie Kanyi , 28th February, 2019 line 1335- 1356

3. POLICE INVESTIGATIONS

MOHAMMED L.K. BOJANG (BOJANG)

47. Mohammed LK Bojang was Commander of Serious Crimes Unit (SCU), Police Headquarters, Banjul in 1995. He testified at the public hearing of the TRRC on April 11, 2019. Sometime that year, Foday Minteh, Chief Inspector of the Police Control Room informed him that the Secretary of State for Finance [sic] Koro Ceesay was involved in a fatal car accident. He instructed Foday Minteh to inform the Scientific Support team so that they would all move to the accident site together. At that stage he did not suspect foul play because the information he received was with respect to a road accident.
48. When they arrived at the scene of the accident around the Jambur/Jambanjelly highway there were many people around. Ebou Njie, Police Mechanical Superintendent first tested the vehicle in his presence. Then Rex King, the Chief Fire Officer also inspected the vehicle and then it was his turn to inspect the vehicle. He asked his photographer Alieu Njie to take photographs while he examined the area to see any signs of how the accident occurred. He observed that there were no visible signs or other evidence pointing to an accident such as skid and tyre marks on the road. The vehicle did not appear to have somersaulted or hit any tree or wall. *“There was no evidence suggesting a high-speed accident as the vehicle did not have any significant dents suggesting heavy impact”*.³¹
49. After doing a thorough examination of the area and seeing no signs or marks to show that the vehicle was involved in an accident, he walked back to the stationed car. That was when he saw the rear number plate of the vehicle lying under the vehicle. It was not burnt, then he knew that something was amiss. If the car had gone up in flames, the number plate would have been burnt along with the car. He presumed that the car had been driven to the scene, parked and deliberately set ablaze with some accelerant liquid which must have been poured on the car.³² It was the first time in his life that he had seen anything like this. He removed the number plate to take back to Police Headquarters.
50. At this point, his suspicions were compounded. The witness reaffirmed that if there was impact on the car, the number plate would have been dented and the inner part of it was not burnt. Consequently, he made a decision to investigate the circumstances surrounding the death of Koro. He told his men to gather whatever information they could so that they could get to the bottom of things.³³ They asked around if Koro had any business in that area and it appeared that the people did not even know who Koro was.³⁴
51. The witness testified that all the Junta members were at the accident site except the Chairman. Those present included Sanna Sabally, Saidibu Hydara [(Sic)]³⁵ Edward Singhatey and

31 [Muhammed L.K Bojang Part 1 11-04-19 - YouTube](#) 30:02-36:02/1:01/11

32 Testimony of Mohammed L.K. Bojang, 11th April 2019, page 17,18, paras 359-360, 382-384

33 Testimony of Mohammed L.K. Bojang, 11th April 2019, page 21, paras 446-448.

34 Testimony of Muhammed LK Bojang 11th April 2019 paras 305-423

35 Hydara and Sabally were arrested on January 27, 1995 after been accused by the former Junta Chairman Yahya Jammeh of plotting to topple his regime. The late Ousman Koro Ceesay was allegedly murdered on June 22 1995 when Hydara and Sabally were detention in Mile II Prison.

Yankuba Touray. He also saw Peter Singhatey. Peter had a bandage on his left wrist which was visible even though he had a long sleeve. He was suspicious as to how Peter sustained the injury on his wrist, but he did not ask him. That evening, there was widespread rumors that the members of the Junta and AFPRC were responsible for Koro’s death and that Peter had burnt his hand in the process of burning the car.

52. The charred remains of Koro were removed from the vehicle by the Fire Service and taken to the mortuary. He did not view the body because he was waiting for the autopsy report which he wished to rely on. From his observation, the inner part of the vehicle was all burnt.
53. Soon after he left the scene of the accident, he discovered that he was under surveillance and was being followed by Baba Saho a National Intelligence Agency (NIA) officer. He felt that it was because of the investigations he had just started. He felt threatened to the extent that he sent his family away to a safe location. The witness indicated that the NIA received their orders from the Director General (DG) who reported directly to former President Jammeh. The following morning, he went to Samba Bah, DG of NIA at the time, and informed him that they were investigating this case.
54. There was top interference in the case. He was asked to desist from investigating Koro’s death. He was informed by FRI Jammeh that former President Jammeh had ordered that they should stop the investigations. However, he insisted on carrying on going ahead. He could not make headway however as he was unable to gather enough information to build a case file and charge the person (s) responsible for murder. He did not receive an autopsy report, fire report, nor the photos that were taken by police photographer, Alieu Njie (deceased) at the scene. He had no documentation to open the case file. The only thing contained in the file was a narration of the investigations he conducted. The file was later handed over to Superintendent Tumani Sanyang through his Station Officer.³⁶ He told him that he was not closing the file he was making it *“sine die”* meaning that he was leaving it open. He was expecting that a day like this would come.”
55. During the course of his investigation, an informant told him that Yankuba, Peter and Edward brutally killed Koro brought his body to Jambur Road and staged an accident by burning the car. From his findings, he suspected the Junta were responsible for the murder of Koro Ceesay .He stated that it was not plausible for a person to sit still in a car and burned to ashes when they could have easily opened the door and escape.³⁷

PA HABIBOU MBYE

56. Pa Habibou Mbye (Pa Mbye) was the Crime Management Coordinator in 1995. In this position he had access to information from reliable informants that supported his work. He also relied on rumours which he used as leads for his investigation. It was through such sources that he got the information about the upcoming budget speech for the 1995/1996 Fiscal Year and the events of the night that Koro Ceesay died. Pa Mbye testified at the public hearings of the TRRC on April 11, 2019.

36 Testimony of Mohammed L.K. Bojang, 11th April 2019, page 26, para 567-572

37 Testimony of Mohammed L.K. Bojang, 11th April 2019, page 32, para 692-697.

57. **Pa Mbye told the Commission that in June 1995:** *“there were rumours that the minister was supposed to give a budget speech to the parliament and that there were some discrepancies, financial discrepancies caused by the Junta which they never wanted the minister to disclose to the parliament. They asked him not to do that but he insisted. All this is from information that I got. Now this is somebody that I do not know much about, but what people are saying about Koro is he is somebody who conquered fear. If he feels that he must do something he will do it. Come what may. He conquered fear.”*³⁸
58. He learnt that Koro was “fearless and stubborn” and was bent on making the disclosures to the parliament. The rumour was rife and it was openly discussed everywhere
59. The witness further told the Commission that very late one night at around (1:00) to two (2:00) a.m. he got a call from one of his informants, informing him that he saw an unusual sight. **Cham Casuarina (FNU),³⁹ the informant told him:** *“I have seen a Mercedes Benz, black in colour that looks like the one that the Ministers have driving towards Jambur followed by a Land Rover; a dark blue coloured Land Rover and they have passed Sukuta.”*⁴⁰ The caller was skeptical as to why this should be happening at this hour of the night and that is the reason why he called the CMC. He thanked the caller and rang off but was deeply puzzled as to what a minister’s car was doing in that area at that hour of the night particularly as the informer had told him that the Land Rover looked like the vehicle that was allocated to **Edward Singhatey**. He could not understand what Edward was doing at that hour of the night that he could not have done during the day⁴¹.
60. When he went to work the following morning and heard the rumours that: **“Koro’s vehicle had an accident on his way to Jambur. The vehicle knocked on a bridge and then caught fire, and the minister was burnt within the vehicle. He was strapped in the vehicle and was burnt in the vehicle. My mind immediately went to my conversation with Cham.”**⁴² When he heard the news about the accident he reflected on the conversation with **Cham** and concluded that this was foul play especially as there was also the rumour that he was killed by the Junta. He juxtaposed the information about the accident with the information that he had received from **Cham** the previous night and the rumours about the budget speech and came to the logical conclusion that **Koro had been killed to silence him.**⁴³ Sacking him was not an option because he could still expose them by going to the media. He had to be silenced permanently. This was his conviction.
61. On the day of the post mortem of **Koro’s** remains he went to the mortuary at the RVH in Banjul where the post mortem was taking place. It was part of his normal duties. On arrival at the hospital he found **Peter Singhatey** at the mortuary. His arm was bandaged *“as if he was protecting a wound or concealing something.”* He had earlier heard rumors of **Peter** sustaining a burn on his arm while he was burning **Koro’s** vehicle.⁴⁴ He deliberately went to

38 Testimony of Pa Habibou Mbye Transcription, Page 28,29 para 614- 617, 626- 627
 39 Pa Mbye called the informer by the name Cham Casuarina as he used to own a night club in Fajara called the Casuarina Night Club and he never knew his first name.
 40 Ibid 37 above transcription, Page 28,29 para 614- 617, 626- 627
 41 [TRRC DAY 42 Pt2 11.04.2019 - YouTube](#) Pa Habibou Mbye 55:28-56:13/1:27:53 accessed 11.11.2021
 42 Ibid 41 above 57:41-58:04/1:27:53 accessed 11.11.2021
 43 Testimony of Pa Habibou Mbye 11th April 2019 Page 29-30, para 640- 645.
 44 Testimony of Pa Habibou Mbye 11th April 2019 , Page 30, para 665- 669.

- Peter** and told him to his face that this was not an accident and *“there must be foul play and the accident must have been framed. This is definitely a foul play”*⁴⁵ According to the witness, even though Peter did not say anything it was obvious that he did not like what he said. It was manifested on his face that he did not take kindly to the statement. When he saw this he decided to go back to his office. He did not wait for the conclusion of the autopsy instead he decided to go to the scene of the accident.
62. **Pa Mbye** emphasised that he was not given any instructions to investigate the death of **Koro**. He made a decision to do so by virtue of his position as CMC.⁴⁶ While at the scene, he noticed that the number plate was detached from the car. It was not there. He also observed that: *“the position where the number plate should have been was not affected by the fire. The paint was still shining. He thought that whoever must have detached it had done so to disguise the identity of the vehicle. That was what he thought until this morning when I heard Mr. Momodou Bojang testifying that he was the one who had detached the number plate”*.⁴⁷
63. **Mr. Mbye was convinced that the accident was:** *“a makeup. It was a frame up. It was not an actual accident really.”*⁴⁸ This conviction was based on the fact that the accident happened on a small bridge. It was at a small bridge and at the two edges of the bridge there is a small wall to prevent vehicles from going over. That is where they put the vehicle as if the driver had accidentally bumped into that wall and that was the cause of the vehicle catching fire. However, there were no visible dents except at the front of the car facing the wall. That dent could not have caused the vehicle to go on fire as the impact was not strong enough.
64. From there he decided to go to the Airport. He was given information by a superior officer **Mr. Sanneh who was at the Airport on the day that Yahya Jammeh** left for Addis Ababa. According to **Mr. Mbye**, **Mr Sanneh informed him that after Koro packed his car he was blocked by two vehicles. One in front and one at the back so there was no way in which he could have moved his vehicle before any of the two moved theirs. The vehicles belonged to Yankuba Touray, Minister of Local Government and Lands and Edward Singhatey, the Vice Chairman. Yankuba was packed in front and Edward at the back. He was further told that Koro was the first to arrive at his vehicle but he had no choice but to wait. When the other two arrived there was a brief discussion between the three of them and he saw Edward enter his vehicle and leave. Yankuba joined Koro in his car and they drove off together and Yankuba’s car was driven off by someone else.**⁴⁹
65. Two days later, the IGP **Gibril Joof**, called him into his office and asked him about the progress of his investigations. He was suspicious of the IGP’s motives since he was not given instructions to investigate and he had instigated the investigations on his own. So he responded that he has not made any progress on the matter. The IGP then enquired as to what he would tell the Junta if they ask about the progress of the case. He told

45 Testimony of Pa Habibou Mbye 11th April 2019 , Page 31, para 680-682.
 46 Testimony of Pa Habibou Mbye 11th April 2019 , Page 32, paragraphs 692-699.
 47 Testimony of Pa Habibou Mbye 11th April 2019 , Page 32, paragraphs 699-710.
 48 Ibid 4. 11:05:19/1:27:53 accessed 11.11.2021
 49 Testimony of Pa Habibou Mbye 11th April 2019 , Page 34-35, paragraphs 751-793.

him that that they would never ask him about the progress of this case. Even if he stayed in office for the next ten (10) years they would not ask him. He went back to his office.⁵⁰

66. The following day, he received an order to see **Yankuba Touray**. When he arrived in **Yankuba's office**, **Yankuba looked up from what he was doing on his desk and gave him an unwavering stare for about two minutes without saying anything. He was told to go back to his office. Shortly after that, he was dismissed from service as CMC. But he was re-instated to his former position 10 months later.**⁵¹

4. THE GUARDS

AMET JANGUM

67. **Amet Jangum** testified at the public hearing of the TRRC on March 28, 2019 that in 1995, he was a Commander posted at **Yankuba Touray's** residence with **Abdoulie Bojang** (Lie Toulou Ba) from Brikama and another man whose name he could not recall. **Corporal Lamin Ndure** (Ndure) was the driver, **Warrant Officer Class One (WO1) Ensa Mendy** (Mendy) and **late S. Bah** (Bah). These were **Yankuba's** orderlies, which was a total of six personnel from the Army stationed in his house.
68. **Jangum** stated that, one day, something unusual happened at the house. **Yankuba Touray** left for the Airport to see **Yahya Jammeh** off. Later that night, **Yankuba Touray** called him on the phone, through his wife **Mammie Minteh** (Mammie) and told him that he was sending his vehicle back home to collect, and take his family to a birthday party at **Edward Singhaty's** official residence. **Yankuba Touray** further told him that a boat will be arriving with ammunitions, so they should dress in civilian clothes and go on patrol at the Fajara Beach.
69. The witness stated that when **Ndure** returned from the Airport, he changed from his military uniform and dressed in civilian attire borrowed from **Mendy**. **Thereafter, they** escorted **Yankuba Touray's** family to **Edward's** residence. He returned to **Yankuba's** house, briefed the two (2) guards about the order he received from **Yankuba Touray**, but he did not discuss this information with the orderlies. The two (2) guards also changed into civilian clothes and they left without their weapon.
70. They were dropped off at Fajara beach after ten (10:00) p.m. and they started patrolling around the beach in the direction of Senegambia in search of a boat with arms and ammunitions. After patrolling for a while without seeing anything, he became fed up and told his men to go back to **Yankuba Touray's** residence, by then it was drizzling.
71. When they returned to **Yankuba Touray's** residence, he saw a fleet of about four vehicles parked outside the compound. He entered through the main gate which lead to the garage. The Guard Room was located around that area. He saw **Edward Singhaty** coming out of the house and he stood near the flowers, smoking. **Edward was wearing American camouflage**

⁵⁰ Testimony of Pa Habibou Mbye 11th April 2019, Page 37, paragraphs 816-820.

⁵¹ Testimony of Pa Habibou Mbye 11th April 2019, Page 38, paragraphs 847-849.

which appeared to be wet and his shoes were muddy. Edward greeted him and asked them to go back and continue patrolling.

72. According to **Jangum**, he was surprised to see **Edward** at that time of the night in **Yankuba's** house. **Abdoulie Bojang** who was more acquainted with **Edward** stood longer to chat with **Edward** as he observed them from a distance. **Bojang** later came running to catch up with him. He could not recall seeing anyone else at the house at the time although he could not say with certainty that no one was there because he was always outside and hardly inside the house. The maids usually come at in the morning and leave in the evening.
73. **Jangum** told the Commission that when they returned to Fajara beach on foot, it started raining again. So he was fed up and told his men that they should go back. This time, they went to the Golf Course at the residence of **Cpt. Ebou Jallow** who was a former Spokesperson for the AFPRC. **Jallow** was not in the country at the time. They were welcomed and led into the sitting room by **Ebou Jallow's** orderly **Bass**. They told **Bass** that they were tired from patrolling the entire day and night and wanted to relax. So, they watched TV and slept until late at night before telling his men to return to **Yankuba Touray's** residence. When they arrived there, there were no vehicles and they did not see anyone outside. So, they carried on with their regular duties.
74. The following day, **Yankuba Touray's** wife **Mammie** showed him a newspaper article which reported that **Koro's** burnt body was found in the bush around **Jambanjelly** or **Jambur** in his Mercedes Benz. He was saddened and surprised by the news but did not connect it with the previous night. Years later, he heard **Ebou Jallow** saying on Freedom Radio that **Koro Ceesay** was killed in **Yankuba's** house. That was the time he reflected on the events of that night and he believed **Ebou Jallow** was speaking the truth because the story fits with what had happened to him and the other guards. He concluded that they were indeed fooled by being sent to conduct meaningless patrol so that they would not be present at the scene of the murder to witness it.⁵²

ENSA MENDY

75. **WO 1 Ensa Mendy**, was an orderly posted to **Yankuba Touray**. He testified at the public hearing of the TRRC on March 28, 2019 that sometime in 1995, he cannot recall the specific date, but on that day, **Yahya Jammeh** was traveling to the AU Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. He went to State House with **Yankuba Touray** to join the Presidential convoy going to the Airport as per the usual protocol. Upon arrival at State House, they waited for almost one hour for the Council Members. When the Council members were finally ready to depart for the Airport, **Yankuba** informed him that he would join one of the Council member's vehicle and instructed him to go home with the driver. This was unusual and it surprised him.
76. That same night, **Yankuba** called him and informed him that there was a threat around BB hotel and Senegambia area and that he should inform the Guard Commander **Corporal**

⁵² Testimony of Amet Jangum 28th March 2019, line 135-508

Jangum to move and go on patrol around those areas. He relayed the information to **Jangum** and six of them left on foot. He returned to **Yankuba's** house but he did not find **Yankuba's** family. He indicated that he had earlier left **Yankuba's** wife (**Mammie**) at the house. Thereafter, they headed to Palma Rima beach towards the residence of the former Vice President **Isatou Njie – Saidy**.

77. The witness stated that later that night, he and others went back to **Yankuba's** house. Upon arrival, he went through the main gate via the corridor to the guard's room which was converted from a car garage. As soon as he entered, he noticed that the house was in a different state. It was dirty, muddy, messy, wet and things were not in the order they were when he was leaving. According to the witness, he left the house in a clean and neat state. There was some dirt, mud and burnt marks on the green fatigue uniform **Yankuba Touray** wore at State House earlier. Those marks were not on the uniform and a senior officer will never wear a burnt uniform. He then saw **Yankuba** pacing in shorts around the house in an uncomfortable state and acting suspicious. As soon as they came in, **Yankuba** left the sitting room and entered his room without speaking to him, as if he was avoiding him. The following day, he saw **Yankuba** in fatigues (green uniform) with two burnt marks on them. He stressed that was the same uniform **Yankuba** wore the previous day and it was not burnt.⁵³
78. These occurrences made him suspect that something must have. But he could not tell what and why? The next day when they went to the office, he heard that **Koro** had been murdered. That was when he reflected on what happened the previous night at **Yankuba's** compound. He also received information at that point that the car was burnt and he connected it **Yankuba's** burned uniform. He suspected that **Yankuba** participated in the murder of **Ousman Koro Ceesay**.⁵⁴

LAMIN FATTY

79. **Lamin Fatty testified at the public hearing of the TRRC on April 10, 2019. He told the Commission that in 1995, he was an orderly attached to Edward Singhaty. It was his duty as an orderly to escort Edward where ever he goes. On one particular occasion, he and Lamin Marong escorted Edward Singhaty to the Airport to see Yahya Jammeh off. Jammeh was traveling to Ethiopia to attend the AU Summit on that day. After leaving the Airport with Edward, they went to Yankuba Touray's house. He was under the impression that he and Lamin Marong were to escort Edward Singhaty into the house as they normally do. Instead of the usual practice Edward gave them a night off and sent them home. They left him at Yankuba's house and returned to Cape House.**⁵⁵
80. **Lamin Fatty further informed the Commission that he did not see Edward Singhaty until the following day. When he saw Lamin Marong the next day, Marong informed him that Koro had been involved in a fatal car accident around the Jambur road and his car was burnt. He and Lamin Marong later escorted Edward Singhaty to the funeral of Koro Ceesay at Dippa kunda. The driver was Abdou Balajo. That day, he regretted**

53 Ensa Mendy TRRC SITTING 28TH MARCH 2019 - YouTube 1:26:48-1:40:50/1:43:46 accessed 11.11.2021

54 Testimony of Ensa Mendy 28th March 2019 para 930

55 Testimony of Lamin Fatty , 10th April 2019, Page 85, Para 1913-1915.

being an orderly because of the humiliation that they received at the funeral. He told the Commission that they were insulted and people were calling them killers and accusing them of killing **Koro**. When they arrived, the elders told **Edward that Koro's body was their corpse**, and they were not going to bury it without them being present.

81. He believed that **Edward was among those that murdered Koro** and his belief was based on the fact that **Peter Singhaty covered his hand in bandages after sustaining a suspicious burnt injury**.⁵⁶

LAMIN S MARONG

82. **Lamin S Marong** was also an orderly to **Edward Singhaty** in 1995. He did not testify in the public hearing. However, he submitted a statement to the commission in which he corroborated **Lamin Fatty's** statement that they were **Edward Singhaty's** escorts on the night that he went to the Airport to see **Chairman Jammeh** off to the AU Summit. He also mentions **Batch Samba Jallow** as being part of the escort.
83. On this particular occasion, a guard of honour was not performed because it was raining heavily. After they left the Airport, **Edward Singhaty** told them that he will pass by **Yankuba Touray's** residence. At **Yankuba's** residence **Edward** then informed them that he did not need an escort and they could go home. He was a bit uneasy with **Edward's** decision and he told **Fatty** and **Ensa Mendy (Yankuba's guard)** that it was not safe for **Edward** to go by himself without an escort. **Ensa Mendy** told him that rebels were coming to attack The Gambia and **Lamin Fatty** suggested that perhaps **Edward** was going to see a girlfriend that is why he did not need an escort.
84. The following morning, **Baboucarr Jatta** the Army commander called requesting to speak to **Edward Singhaty**. When they were done speaking, **Edward** told them that **Koro Ceesay** was dead.
85. At around 17:00hrs. They left for Latrikunda mosque to attend the burial of **Koro Ceesay**. Upon our arrival, a man from Bakau called **Basiru** said to **Edward Singhaty**, 'that is your dead body!' the **Imam** also said to **Edward**, "*we have been waiting for you, so that we can perform the burial, now that you are around we can perform the burial*".

LAMIN NDURE

86. **WO1 Lamin Ndure** was a corporal and a driver to **Yankuba Touray** in 1995. He testified at the public hearing of the TRRC on June 25, 2019. He told the Commission that one night, **Yankuba's** family and residential guards were sent out of the house.
87. That evening, he was ordered to drop **Yankuba's family (wife, sister in law and two children) from the house at Keur Serign to Edward Singhaty's home at Cape Point, Bakau for a programme**. He also dropped the **three residential guards (Pa Amet Jangum**

56 Testimony of Lamin Fatty 10th April 2019, Page 86-87, Para 1944-1958.

Abdoulie Tulo Bah and a third person whose name he has forgotten) off at the beach to carry out their patrol. They were told that an unknown boat was expected to land on the beach. That was quite odd as it was the first time it occurred whilst working with Yankuba.⁵⁷

88. After he dropped them off, he and Mendy returned to the house. Upon arrival, he noticed a number of vehicles (Pajeros and Toyota Land Cruisers) parked at the gate of the house. As he sat outside his vehicle, he saw Edward through the banisters of the fence outside the house. This was not usual as Edward Singhaty was not a frequent visitor at Yankuba's house and came there only when they had a programme and on that day there was no programme.
89. He then decided to go to the shop. When he returned from the shop all the cars had dispersed, and the house empty. The garage door was also left wide open. However, he did not find the house in its normal clean and tidy state. This statement corroborates Ensa Mendy's statement about the state of the house⁵⁸.
90. Ndure told the Commission that for the two years he worked with Yankuba he had never seen the house like that. The tiles were dirty and he perceived a foul smell: *"that is to say that the smell was foul, smell not the pleasant, smell that we were accustomed to."*⁵⁹ However, he did not know how the house came to be in that state but he wondered about it and became suspicious.
91. The next day, he heard rumours that Koro Ceesay had died. Subsequently he heard that the Junta members may have been involved in the death of Koro Ceesay. His suspicions were later confirmed the following day when he learned over the radio the Koro Ceesay had died in an accident. He came to the conclusion that Yankuba and Edward were in some way associated with the death of Koro Ceesay and that was why he was asked to take the family and the guards away from the house⁶⁰.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

DEMBA NJIE

92. Demba Njie testified at the public hearing of the TRRC on February 27, 2019. He told the Commission that he was appointed as the Chief of Staff at the State House in November 1994, and he remained in that position for three years working closely with Chairman Jammeh. He knew Ousman Koro Ceesay: *"as a gentleman, calm, disciplined, intelligent and somebody with integrity and respect. ----Wanting to help Chairman Jammeh to succeed in his mission I scouted Ousman Koro Ceesay. I told him I know someone if you have him by your side he will be very helpful because of the qualities that he has."*⁶¹ When Chairman Jammeh asked who this person was, he told him Ousman Koro Ceesay. He asked him to

57 TRRC LAMIN NDURE DAY 59 PT1 25.06.19 - YouTube 1:33:40-1:47:09/2:38:14accessed 11.11.2021

58 Ibid 53 above. 1:46:40-1:59:36/2:38:14 accessed11:11:2021

59 Testimony of Lamin Ndure, 25th June 2019, Page 35, Para 770-790.

60 Testimony of Lamin Ndure 25th June 2019 para 807- 899

61 TRRC DAY 25 Pt2 27.02.2019 - YouTube Demba Njie16:36-18:19/53:51 accessed11.11.2021

bring him to him and Demba Njie went to Quantum Associates where Koro was working and brought him to the Chairman.

93. A fortnight after this introduction Koro was appointed as Permanent Secretary Office of the President. During that period he became an asset and was very helpful to Chairman Jammeh. Shortly thereafter he was appointed Minister of Finance and became very close to Chairman Jammeh. In responsibility Koro was becoming closer to the Chairman than the other members of the Council. According to Demba Njie: *"this was not favourable to Edward Singhaty as he did not want anyone to be between him and the Chairman"*⁶², Jammeh had high esteem for Koro and relied on him for advise and that is when Demba Njie believes that jealousy started to creep in.
94. Demba Njie had travelled as part of the advance party to prepare the ground for the Chairman's trip to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for the OAU summit in 1995. Barely one hour after Chairman Jammeh's arrival in Addis Ababa, Demba Njie received a call from Lang Tombong Tamba the State Guard Commander informing him that something serious had happened. When he asked what had happened he said: *"Koro is dead"*⁶³ Immediately he felt guilty because he was the one who introduced him to the Chairman and he did not expect him to die so soon. Then Lang Tombong told him that he suspected that there was foul play. He further went on to tell him that Koro had an accident and the car got burnt but if you see the vehicle there were no dents so it could not have been an accident.⁶⁴
95. What surprised Demba Njie is that throughout the trip he never heard Yahya Jammeh mention the name Koro Ceesay. This was a State Minister that had died in such a manner and a person that he had introduced him to and he never discussed it with him. From Addis Ababa they travelled to Mecca to perform the Umra (pilgrimage) and throughout this period Jammeh never talked about Koro Ceesay.
96. Upon their return to The Gambia, he was informed by some soldiers that on the day of the departure of the Chairman for the OAU Summit Yahya Jammeh and Edward Singhaty were seen at the foot of the aircraft having a conversation. Then at the top of the stairs before entering the air-craft Jammeh called Edward Singhaty again, and they talked. This was not normal. That is why it caught the attention of the soldiers to warrant comment.
97. According to Demba Njie, his informers also told him that immediately after the aircraft took off, Koro was asked to join Edward in his vehicle and they left together. He was also told that they drove to Yankuba Touray's house in Kololi.⁶⁵ That is where he was allegedly killed, put in his car and taken to a bridge near Jambur and that is where the car was burnt. In addition he was told that Edward's brother, Peter Singhaty accidentally burned his arm when he was burning Koro's car.

98. The silence surrounding the death of Koro Ceesay continued. When he returned to The Gambia neither Chairman Jammeh nor any member of the Junta spoke to him about the issue.

MUSTAPHA L. MARONG

62 Ibid 57 above 21:03-21:12/53:51accessed 11.11.2021

63 Ibid 57 above 24:07-24:11/53:51 accessed 11.11.2021

64 Ibid 57 above 24:22-24:57/53:51 accessed 11.11.2021

65 It should be noted that Yankuba was resident in Kerr Serign at this time. He later moved to Kololi

99. **Mustapha Marong** was the Attorney General of The Gambia in 1995. He testified at the public hearing of the TRRC on April 16, 2019. He told the Commission that on June 24, 1995, at 10:00 pm, he received a phone call from **Mbamba Tamedou**, the Minister of Information at that time informing him about the death of **Koro**. **Mbamba** told him that **Koro's** official vehicle was found incinerated in the bush in Jambur and that there was somebody in the vehicle. On ascertaining that there was only one person in the vehicle he concluded that it must be **Koro** because he drove himself.
100. As he was in his village he could not immediately come down but informed **Mbamba Tamedou** that he would travel down to join the ministers who would be going to the family home to pay their condolences. What he found surprising however, was that just before receiving the phone call from **Mbamba Tamedou**, he had spoken to **Edward Singhatey** the Vice Chairman of the AFPRC and the acting Head of State and he did not mention the death of **Koro**. This was particularly strange as he was the Attorney General and should have been informed immediately.
101. On the way to Banjul, he called the Minister of Tourism, **Susan Waffa Ogoo** and asked why the government had not announced the death of **Koro** when Senegal had already done so. It was *“devastating and disgraceful that a Minister who had served his country faithfully and sincerely had died in such a manner and the government was keeping quiet about it”*. She told him that she had spoken to **Edward** about it and it was: *“like hitting your head against a brick wall.”*⁶⁶ He was soon to understand what she meant when she said these words.
102. He went to the funeral home and he met **Seni Sise**, **Koro's** father. He commiserated with him and told him that **Koro** and himself were the only two civilians on the AFPRC. The rest were all security. He explained that the Council and the Cabinet were different. You had all the Ministers on the Cabinet but there was only the Minister of Finance and the Attorney General and Minister of Justice on the Council. As they were the only two civilians they sat next to each other at Council meetings. As Attorney General he promised **Mr. Sise** that **Koro's** *“death would be investigated.”*⁶⁷
103. When he was at the **Sise's** house, **Ebou Jallow** (then government spokesperson) called enroute from Libya and assured **Mr. Sise** that **Koro's** death would be investigated and that no stone would be left unturned. He was seating next to **Mr. Sise** and he heard the conversation. To this day the witness doubts if a stone was ever lifted.
104. **Marong** told the Commission that he has the strong belief that **Koro's** death was connected to the Thirty- Five Million Dollars (\$35,000,000) that **Ebou Jallow**, spokesperson for AFPRC government had negotiated with Exim Bank in Taipei, Taiwan on behalf AFPRC. The said amount was purportedly for the government. He, **Marong** had signed the Loan's Act that the government could borrow money on behalf of the government and he testified on such a matter at the **Janneh** Commission. It was an aberration that the government spokesman should negotiate a loan when the Minister of Finance was around. However, the government was no respecter of laws and did whatever they wanted.

66 MUSTAPHA MARONG TRRC SITTING 16th APRIL 2019 - YouTube 23:04-24:37/1:07:15 accessed 11.11.2021

67 Ibid 64 above25:04-26:26/1:07:15 accessed11.11.2021

105. After leaving the **Sise** home he called **Edward Singhatey** and told him that **Koro's** death needed to be investigated. He had just left the **Sise** home and the family believed that foul play was involved in **Koro's** death. This was because **Koro** had no business being in Jambur. As soon as he said this, he noticed a crescendo in the tone of **Edward Singhatey's** voice as it went up saying, “murder”!? Then he (**Edward**) insisted firmly that the death of **Koro** was an accident. This was the next day after the incident, by then, there was no information “no docket” sent to the Ministry of Justice with respect to the circumstances surrounding **Koro's** death seeking for an opinion. It was too early to make the conclusion. Nevertheless, **Edward Singhatey** as early as twenty fourth (24), 1995 June had concluded that it was an accident.⁶⁸
106. He advised **Edward** that the continued silence was sending the wrong signals to the people and it was giving the country a bad image. **Edward** was adamant that it would only be announced after the autopsy. The pathologist had advised that an announcement should not be made. This was laughable as this was a matter for the government and not a matter for the pathologist.
107. On the day of the funeral he went early. When **Edward Singhatey** and **Yankuba Touray** arrived at the funeral people were calling them killers and here is your corpse take it and bury it.
108. When **Yahya Jammeh** returned from his trip, he made a statement in Cabinet saying that: *“people were accusing Council Members of killing Koro however what he had to say was that it would not have been necessary to kill him all they had to do was to terminate his appointment if he was not doing his job”*.⁶⁹ **Jammeh** referred to *“Koro's death as an act of God.”*⁷⁰ **Edward Singhatey** chipped in and said: *“it was an accident.”* The civilian ministers kept quiet.
109. The witness believed that the death of **Koro** was suspicious, yet the government did not care to make any inquiries or conduct investigations into his death. Additionally, there was no Coroner's inquest to establish the cause of death as the case was never referred to the Ministry of Justice. He indicated that there was general indifference to the death of **Koro** and an unwillingness to investigate the matter. He confirmed that he was in **Jammeh's** office when he ordered **Kaba Bajo** to proceed quietly with the investigations into the death of **Koro**.⁷¹ This according to the witness was an implied instruction by **Jammeh** not to proceed with any investigations.
110. **Marong** informed the Commission that he received information that **Koro** was lured to the house of **Yankuba** where he was killed. A caravan of speeding vehicles including a Mercedes Benz and a Nissan Patrol vehicle with tinted windows were seen passing through Farato heading towards Jambur whilst it was drizzling. The following morning, an incinerated vehicle that was allegedly involved in an accident at a culvert in Jambur forest was found. He believed **Koro** was murdered and his body put in the Mercedes Benz, driven to Jambur

68 Testimony of Mustapha L. Marong , page 11, Paragraph 213-228

69 Mustapha L. Marong Transcription, page 16, Paragraph 330-333.

70 Mustapha L. Marong Transcription, page 16, Paragraph 337.

71 Testimony of Mustapha L. Marong page 18, Para 379-381.

and burnt to get rid of any signs or evidence of foul play.

LAMIN KABA BAJO

111. **Lamin Kaba Bajo (Kaba Bajo) was the Interior Minister in 1995, he testified at the public hearing of the TRRC on April 16, 2019. He told the Commission that he learnt about the death of Koro Ceesay during the trip with Chairman Jammeh to Ethiopia for the OAU Summit in June 1995. Upon arrival in Addis Ababa, Yahya Jammeh summoned his delegation to his hotel room later in the night for a meeting. He informed them that he had received news from Banjul that Koro died in a car crash on the Janbanjelly-Jambur road and his car was almost burnt to ashes, saying “this is a very unfortunate thing.” Jammeh told them that the situation was being investigated and Vice-Chairman Edward Singhatey and those on the ground were handling the matter. He noted that Jammeh was not emotional when he delivered the news of Koro’s sudden death, nonetheless his mood was sombre.**
112. The witness confirmed that just before the flight to Addis departed, **Jammeh had conversation with Edward Singhatey** at the foot of the aircraft. When **Jammeh** proceeded to board the aircraft, he stopped at the door of the aircraft before entering and called **Edward Singhatey**. They had another discussion before **Jammeh boarded the flight. He stated that he had traveled extensively with Jammeh but he had never seen anything like that before. The usual protocol before going up the staircase would have been a handshake and if necessary one or two words before Jammeh boards the flight.**
113. He could not remember how long the flight took. Ordinarily, Banjul-Addis Ababa flight should be about eight (8) hours thirty (30) minutes. The meeting was summoned barely fifteen (15) to twenty (20) minutes of their arrival in Addis Ababa, to inform them of **Koro’s death. Lamin Kaba Bajo** admitted that the information reached them quite quickly and at that early stage, **Jammeh knew who the victim was, where the incident had taken place and also that the victim Koro was burnt beyond recognition inside his vehicle.**
114. **When he was confronted with Demba Njie’s testimony which suggested that Jammeh never mentioned the issue of Koro’s death Lamin Kaba Bajo found this very odd and insisted that the meeting did take place and opined that perhaps Njie may not have been present at the meeting or maybe he had a reason to say what he said. He averred that despite his relationship with Jammeh, the latter would never ask him not to investigate the case or ask him to do anything wrong. However, he also found it odd that as Minister of Interior Jammeh never mentioned anything to him about the incident after the meeting in Addis Ababa. The trip lasted for a whole week, and no subsequent discussions took place between them on the issue.**
115. On their return leg of their journey to The Gambia, he could not remember the countries through which they traveled, but he they transited in Switzerland where they were joined on board by **Ebou Jallow**. He stated that he did not know the nature of **Jallow’s** mission abroad, neither was he aware at the time that **Jallow was negotiating a loan between the Government of The Gambia and the Exim Bank of Taiwan.**
116. **Lamin Kaba Bajo further informed the Commission that it was customary for Cabinet**

to discuss negotiations for loan deals involving the Government and at a certain stage, the Ministry of Finance would present such agreements to Cabinet. But, on this particular deal, he was not aware of it. Based on his knowledge of governance, it was the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance to negotiate deals involving loans to Government according to the Loans Act. He later learnt that this loan negotiation was done by Cpt. Ebou Jallow who actually secured a Thirty Five Million Dollars (\$35,000,000) loan from the Taiwanese and gave Jammeh, Five Million Dollars (\$5,000,000) from that loan. However, he denied that he, Ebou Jallow and Yankuba were each given Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000)

117. During the flight home he observed that **Cpt. Ebou Jallow and Chairman Jammeh were engaged in extensive discussions but he did not know what they were discussing. When it was put to him that Ebou Jallow explained that he was in State House with him on the day the delegation arrived in Banjul, he admitted it saying and it was the normal protocol.**
118. **An article written published by Ebou Jallow in 1999 on the ‘Death of Ousman Koro Ceesay’ was read out to witness. In the article Ebou Jallow claimed that he had discussions ‘with Jammeh in the presence of Lami Bajo about Koro Ceesay’s death and had advised Jammeh to dissociate himself from Koro’s killer’s because it would not be good for him or the image of the country.’ Kaba Bajo denied that such a meeting ever took place. He did not challenge the publication however due to the unceremonious manner in which Ebou Jallow had left the country and his (Bajo’s) position in government.**
119. **Kaba Bajo told the Commission that he had heard these allegation by Jallow in 1995 after he left the country and sent a resignation letter. That was when he heard that Edward, Yankuba and others killed Koro. He had access to a copy of Ebou Jallow’s letter addressed to Jammeh as it was circulated to the press and many other institutions around October 1995. Jallow was also interviewed by BBC about those allegations.**
120. Continuing with his testimony, **Kaba Bajo told the Commission that on June 30, 1995, he joined the Chairman’s delegation to offer condolences to Koro’s family in Dippa Kunda. The delegation also included elders from the Supreme Islamic Council. Kaba Bajo narrated that Yahya Jammeh offered his condolences to the family and assured them that the matter would be investigated. Since he was present when the Chairman made the statement, he regarded it as an indirect instruction for the police to investigate the matter. Accordingly, he instructed the then IGP, Mr. Gibril Joof to initiate the investigation. For this reason, he was surprised and disappointed that Joof, said he received no such instructions from him when the investigators asked him about the issue.**
121. He claimed that he followed up with **Mr. Joof a few times on the progress of the investigation. Joof told him that the respective units have not yet reported to him on any leads. He insisted that he did everything he could have done and even proposed to the IGP to make a Press Release appealing to the General Public for more information or evidence to assist them in their investigations. Kaba Bajo believed that he had fully discharged his responsibility to the best of his ability to investigate or cause the investigation of his**

fellow minister's death. However, he admitted that he did not put pressure on the Police to investigate because he assumed that Koro's death was an accident and it was the IGP's responsibility to investigate. During Cabinet Meetings, he provided updates on the status of the case, but there was no pressure from the Cabinet Colleagues regarding the incident⁷².

122. When confronted with the testimony of **Mustapha Marong**, Attorney General, that **Jammeh told him (Bajo) to proceed with the investigation quietly. He denied it, stating that he could not imagine Jammeh** giving him such an instruction in the presence of a third party. He also disagreed that he failed to investigate the case because he was only interested in protecting his job and his relationship with **Jammeh**.

123. As Minister of Interior, he had entrusted responsibility for the investigations on the IGP who should have ensured that a request was made to the Attorney General for a Coroner's inquest. He denied that he was not interested in an investigation and did not do anything with respect to the case. However, he admitted that he could have done a better job and that his failure to do what was expected was a general malaise on the part of the entire system. He also agreed that there was negligence on his part when he was confronted with paragraph 28 of his own statement which he read out for himself to the Commission: It read: *"Regarding why there was no investigation I believe it is just out of negligence, but I have no reason not to proceed with the investigations neither did I instruct anyone to discontinue the investigations. It was a lapse on my side and on my Ministry. Koro was not only a colleague, he was more than that. He was a brother."*⁷³

124. **Kaba Bajo denied knowledge that his colleagues in Council were responsible for Koro's death as he had no evidence at the time to believe that this was the case. However, it was conveyed to him that what Ebou Jallow was saying about the death of Koro turned out to be. He conceded that in view of the revelations coming out of the TRRC, he would have lost his job had he investigated the matter. He stated he was not aware that Pa Mbye, former CMC, lost his job because he was investigating Koro's death. Thus, he could not have made any enquiries regarding his dismissal.**

WUYEH SIMA

125. Wuyeh Sima a hunter living in Jambur did not testify during the public hearing. However, he provided a statement to the Commission in which he stated that one night he left his house around eleven (11:00) pm to go on a regular hunting exercise in the forest around the outskirts of Jambur and Jambanjelly. Whilst in the forest, he saw four cars driving from the Farato end. They were two black Pajero four-wheel drive, one double cabin pick-up and one saloon car that looked like a Mercedes Benz. He stated that it was unusual to see such expensive cars at that time on that roads. It was rainy at the time and the roads were in a very poor state. He discreetly followed them until they stopped at a particular area and he watched at a distance of approximately 300 metres.

⁷² Lamin Kabba Bajo TRRC SITTING 16th APRIL 2019 PART 3 - YouTube 32:13-42:02/1:34:17 accessed 11.11.2021

⁷³ Ibid 68 above 38:01-38:39/1:34:17 accessed 11.11.2021

126. According to the witness statement about five (5) to (6) people came out of their cars and left their headlights on. Thereafter, they tried to set fire on some dry grass with a matchstick, but they failed in the first attempt because it was raining. They tried again and finally lit the dry grass and placed it under the small Benz. That illuminated the whole area as the fire started to engulf the car. After a little while, he heard the tyres explode and after twenty five (25) to thirty (30) minutes they boarded their cars and drove off. He went closer to the blazing car and found that everything was burnt except for one spot on the back where the registration plate was mounted and the metal frame which was glowing red. He found the matchbox they used on the ground, picked it up, wrapped it in nylon and kept it. He reached home around one (1:00) am and told his late elder brother what he witnessed. The news spread in the morning and his brother went to the scene and confirmed what he told him.

127. The information about him witnessing the incident spread so widely that he was forced to retire voluntarily from his position as a driver at Water Resources Department, where he had had been working since 1983 out of fear. He went on self-exile to Senegal for thirteen months because he believed that his life was in danger. However, he was never questioned, interviewed or invited by the police or other security agencies about the incident⁷⁴.

ADVERSELY MENTIONED PERSONS

128. **Edward Singhatey and Yankuba Touray** two of the persons adversely mentioned by **Alhajie Kanyi** for the murder of **Ousman Koro** appeared before the TRRC. **Yankuba Touray's** refused to testify before the TRRC on June 26, 2019, on claims that he has constitutional immunity. His uncooperative behavior with the TRRC resulted in the Commission ordering his arrest on charges of contempt. The office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice **Abubacarr Ba Tambadou charged him** with murder. In January this 2021, the Supreme Court ruled that **Touray** had no immunity from prosecution for the murder of Ceesay. The trial of **Yankuba Ceesay** for the murder of **Ousman Koro Ceesay** started in November 2019. On July 14, **Yankuba Touray** was found guilty of murder and sentenced to death by hanging.

129. **Peter Singhatey** the third adversely mentioned person lives outside the jurisdiction of The Gambia. Both **Edward Singhatey** and **Yankuba Touray** were served with notice of allegations made against them. However service could not be effected on **Peter Singhatey**.

EDWARD DAVID SINGHATEY

130. **Edward Singhatey was the Vice Chairman of the AFPRC in 1995. He testified voluntarily before the Commission on October 21, 2019.**

131. **Edward Singhatey told the Commission that the last time he saw Koro Ceesay was at the Airport, when they went to bid Yahya Jammeh farewell when he was traveling to Addis Ababa. Thereafter, they all dispersed, and he returned home. The following**

⁷⁴ Witness statement of Wuyeh Sima

morning, he went to watch a football at the stadium. That was when he received a call from Alhagie Mustapha Wadda, then Secretary General, who informed him about Koro's death.⁷⁵ When they attended the burial, there was some hostility towards them because they people blamed the military for Koro's death. This was politically motivated since Dippa Kunda was a PPP stronghold at the time and were not particularly welcoming towards the AFPRC.

132. He insisted that a formal investigation was launched into the circumstances surrounding Koro's suspicious death. He told the Commission that he received information from Jammeh and the NIA DG, Samba Bah that Koro was assassinated in connection with money from Libya that was meant for the Casamance rebels. Jammeh had tasked Koro to deliver the said sum to the rebels amidst a border closure conflict between The Gambia and Senegal. He said, he was the only one privy to this information because Jammeh did not trust Yankuba Touray or Kaba Bajo.⁷⁶ He later learned from Samba Bah that the NIA launched a private investigation into Koro's death as ordered by Jammeh. Samba Bah told him that he did not rule out the accident as the cause of death. After the report was prepared and handed over to Jammeh, he did not receive any feedback from him.⁷⁷ This allegation was refuted as completely false by Salif Sadio head of the MFDC in an interview with Alagie Manneh of the Standard Newspaper.⁷⁸
133. Edward Singhatey vehemently denied involvement in the assassination of Koro despite been confronted by the evidence of other witnesses. He denied claims that they drove Koro's official car to Jambur and staged an accident and incinerated the vehicle with his body inside. He claimed that he had a cordial relationship with Koro even though it was private as he did not want people to see how close they were for obvious reasons. He refuted allegations that he was envious of Koro because he was growing increasingly closer to Jammeh. He emphasised that this was no threat as Jammeh did not have permanent friends and always said that "he had no friends or advisers." If Jammeh needed a favour from someone, that person would be the "star of the month." The witness made the ominous statement that: "who ever got close to Jammeh paid the price".
134. According to Edward everyone was regarded highly by Jammeh, and that Koro was relied upon for his expertise and knowledge in keeping the economic affairs of the state in check. He stated that Koro's position in government was not one which he would be envious of because he had initially been offered the same position, but he declined it. So they had no issues, contrary to popular belief.⁷⁹
135. He denied intimidating Koro and being ruthless in the army.⁸⁰ He also denied the allegations made in the testimony of Bajen Ceesay that he threatened to kill Koro. He also denied the rumours that the AFPRC members were not happy that Koro was about to reveal financial misappropriation by the AFPRC in his budget speech. He further stated

75 Testimony of Edward David Singhatey 21st October 2019, Page 52, Para 1158- 1163.
 76 Edward David Singhatey, 21st October 2019, Page 56, Para 1256-1263.
 77 Testimony of Edward David Singhatey, 21st October 2019, Page 57-58, Para 1272-1296.
 78 Salif Sadio Commander-in-chief, Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de Casamance - The Standard Newspaper Gambia accessed 11.11.2021
 79 Testimony of Edward David Singhatey , 21st October 2019, Page 59-62, Para 1316-1399.
 80 Testimony of Edward David Singhatey , 21st October 2019, Page 63, Para 1400-1408.

that nothing would have appeared on the budget speech that the AFPRC Council would not have known beforehand. He insisted that he was not at Yankuba's house at any time that night. From the Airport he went home and he was with his driver and orderly Lamin Marong.⁸¹

136. Edward Singhatey denied the testimonies of all the security detail who testified at the Commission. He denied that Batch Samba Jallow was his driver at the time so he could not have been in the car. He further denied Lamin Marong's and Lamin Fatty's allegation that he was dropped off at Yankuba's house and they were asked to leave as this would have been irresponsible of him seeing that he was the Acting Chairman at the time. He could not risk going anywhere on his own without his security detail⁸² He strongly avowed that he did not think that he was "so mentally deficient and so unintelligent as to commit such fundamental and grave errors". He challenged the timing of the witnesses which placed him at the Airport and Yankuba's house at the same time with no consideration to human error in estimating time especially after a lapse of so many years.⁸³
137. Similarly, he denied the testimony of Jangum, that he saw him at Yankuba's house after he returned from patrol and that he was smoking. According to Edward this statement was false as he does not smoke⁸⁴. He also denied all the other incidents that were said to have occurred that night including Lamin Ndure's testimony that Yankuba's family were taken to his home, as well as sending the guards on a fake patrol mission.
138. The witness denied the testimony of Alhagie Kanyi with respect to his involvement in the murder of Koro, stating that he only had a strict professional relationship with Kanyi.⁸⁵ He denied being present at the scene of the murder as he could not be in two places at the same time.⁸⁶ Additionally, he said "I do not know Kanyi enough to commit a capital offence with him".⁸⁷ Finally he found it completely unthinkable for Yankuba Touray to allow a crime of such magnitude to be committed in his house.

5. MOTIVES FOR THE KILLING OF OUSMAN KORO CEESAY

139. From the evidence gathered by the Commission, Jealousy and the need to permanently silence Koro so that he would not disclose the irregularities in the financial management of the State are the main contributory factors to the killing of Ousman Koro Ceesay. Demba Njie alluded to the jealousy factor in his testimony when he said that "Edward did not want anyone to come between him and Jammeh". Koro's growing closeness to the President began to irk Edward Singhatey who was the Vice Chairman and up to that point had enjoyed very close relationships with Jammeh. The rumours about financial misappropriation by the Junta and the determination of Koro to reveal this in the budget speech was rife as indicated by Pa Mbye former CMC and others point to a need to silence him permanently.

81 Testimony of Edward David Singhatey , 21st October 2019, Page 71, Para 1591-1600.
 82 Testimony of Edward David Singhatey, 21st October 2019, Page 74, Para 1654-1660.
 83 Testimony of Edward David Singhatey, 21st October 2019, Page 74, Para 1654-1660.
 84 Edward David Singhatey, 21st October 2019, Page 76-77, Para 1723-1735.
 85 Edward David Singhatey, 21st October 2019, Page 101-107, Para 2267-2389, 2420-2430
 86 Edward David Singhatey, 21st October 2019, Page 111, Para 2505-2523
 87 Edward David Singhatey, 21st October 2019, Page 114, Para 2589-2590.

140. **The jealousy factor cannot be discarded if juxtaposed with the elimination of Sanna Sabally and Saidibu Hydara. Edward Singhatey played a pivotal role in eliminating his former colleagues from the Junta. Secondly Edward Singhatey was the only member of the Council present when Yahya Jammeh gave Demba Njie the Chief of Staff the instruction to tell the guards that any member of the Council who came to the State House after six (6) o'clock should be shot and killed. He enjoyed a privileged position which he did not want to lose.**
141. Even though **Edward Singhatey** suggested that he was already number two (2) in the Council and therefore had no reason to be envious of **Koro**, is not sufficient excuse not to be jealous. It is perfectly normal human behavior for a number two (2) to be jealous of a person who is climbing the ladder very fast, and could potentially threaten the position of the number two (2).
142. Speculations about financial mis-appropriation had gone into the realm of reality but were not consistent with the Junta's image of persons that had come to fight corruption. Less than a year after coming in with commitments to *accountability, probity and transparency*, the Junta had already started to engage in mal-practices as indicated by the former Attorney General **Lamin Marong** who described the negotiation of the \$35,000,000 (Thirty-Five Million Dollar) loan by **Cpt. Ebou Jallow, the Spokesperson of the AFPRC with the Exim Bank in Taipei, Japan on behalf of the AFPRC government as an aberration of the Loans Act. The fact that part of the money Five Million Dollars (\$5,000,000) that was given to the Chairman from money that was intended for the country was corruption which was against their stated agenda of fighting corruption. They could not risk exposure.**
143. The fact too that it was the government spokesperson who negotiated the loan and not the Minister of Finance who was mandated under law to do so, demonstrates the Junta's intention very early on to misuse these funds. They could not have used **Koro** who had strict moral and fiscal discipline and would not have tolerated any financial malpractice and true to form was determined to correct the anomaly when he discovered it. Thus leading to his demise.
144. The revelations by **Edward Singhatey, that Jammeh, and Samba Bah, Director General of the NIA were engaged in financial dealings with the MFDC rebels in which he used Koro to transfer the funds to the rebels and unfortunately according to them Koro was assassinated in the process of delivering such monies. While this statement was denied by Salif Sadio, the MFDC rebel leader, the fact that such activities were on-going at that time by a government that claimed that they were going to be accountable to the people points to a lack of transparency.**
145. In fact, if **Koro** was killed in relation to the money from Libya, it is more likely that **Koro Ceesay would not have supported the use of that money for the benefit of Casamance rebels, based on the evidence as to his character. The evidence reveals that Koro Ceesay as Finance Minister would insist that all monies received from partners to the government of The Gambia would be disclosed to the public. During that period,**

the public was never informed that at the time that monies were received from Libya which were to be given to the Casamance rebels. Even at the time of the death of Koro this never came up.

146. The motives for killing Koro are clear. The jealousy factor is personally motivated and the silencing factor is a collective motivation based on the consideration that the Junta did not want their actions to be exposed. The fear that the two financial mal-practices would be exposed where sufficiently serious to put **Yahya Jammeh** and his military Junta members in panic. Clearly, members of the Junta would not want these uncovered.

CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE KILLING OF KORO

147. **There was a real threat to kill Koro. The threat by Edward Singhatey to kill him was disconcerting enough for him to confide in his mother who advised him to quit as it was not worth his life. He was her only son and she did not want to lose him. The threat permeated the prison walls prompting Cpt. Ebrima Kambi also a soldier to send a warning to Koro to be very careful of Edward Singhatey because he was very ruthless and dangerous. The man who conquered fear was determined to be the whistleblower and expose the military Junta for embezzling funds meant for the Gambian people, which he could not condone because he believed it was not right.**
148. **Koro had never failed on his promise to come home every day to see the family. On the day that he was killed his sister Bajen attested to the fact that he had called home to say that he would come home after seeing Jammeh off at the Airport and ordered his favorite foods for dinner. He never turned up and they never saw him again.**
149. **Kanyi's testimony is the most important piece of direct evidence linking Edward Singhateh (Vice Chairman and Acting Chairman of the AFPRC at that material time) and Yankuba Touray, a State Minister in their capacity as Junta and Council members to the cold-blooded, brutal murder of Koro – a State Minister and Council Member. In addition to this direct evidence, a host of circumstantial evidence surrounding the death of Koro from various witnesses shows the unusual behavior, movement and patterns of conduct from the Junta members all the way to the very top which point to the fact that Edward and the Junta members assassinated Koro.**
150. It also shows **Edward and Yankuba -prominent members of the Junta-acting in concert to achieve their objective in a state planned conspiracy to assassinate a fellow Minister and Council Member. The evidence received by the TRRC reveals how Jammeh, ex post facto, as Chairman was involved and how Edward Singhatey as the Vice Chairman and Acting Chairman at the material time planned and led the operation to kill Koro with his brother Peter who was a de facto member of the Junta and to all accounts was always present wherever his brother was.**
151. The evidence further shows how **Yankuba, a Minister of State at the time availed his own home where he lived with his family as the scene of the murder and how both Edward**

Singhatey and Yankuba participated in the vicious killing of their own colleague and fellow Minister and Council member. The direct and indirect circumstantial evidence from the various testimonies in this investigative theme meshed together formed the logical narrative of events surrounding the killing of Koro.

152. According to the testimony of Kanyi, before the Junta and Council Members converged at State House to join the Presidential convoy that was to escort Jammeh to the Airport and see him off, Edward Singhatey planned the pre-meditated murder of Koro at Yankuba's house and briefed his brother Peter Singhatey, Kanyi, B.K Jatta, Pa Alieu Gomez and Tumbul Tamba at his then official residence in Cape Point about an unknown operation to "get rid of one fucking cunt" which Kanyi later understood to mean to kill Koro although according to him, he did not understand what it meant initially. They were all driven to Yankuba's house (which he did not know before that date) and left in strategic locations awaiting the arrival of a Minister of State.
153. The testimonies of Kanyi, as to no one being present at Yankuba's house when they arrived was corroborated by Jangum, Mendy and Ndure. Everyone was removed from Yankuba's house to provide an opportunity for the murder to take place without the presence of non-participating witnesses. Ndure and Jangum testified that they were instructed to escort Yankuba's family to Edward's official residence for an event. Thereafter, Yankuba sent his guards and orderlies to go on a wild goose chase patrol along the beach to watch out for and intercept a ship suspected to have arms and ammunition on board and he instructs his driver to take them. All this was done to ensure that none of the security details and family members of Yankuba were present in the house.
154. Jammeh's unusual behavior at the Airport, just before the flight departed when he had conversations with Edward at the foot of the aircraft and then at the top of the stairs of the aircraft. This was not normal practice as narrated by Kaba Bajo who had traveled extensively with the former Chairman and he never saw anything like that before. The usual protocol before going up the staircase would be a handshake and if necessary one or two words. This abnormal behavior was also narrated by Demba Njie who even though he was not present was told by soldiers about this phenomenon.
155. The unusual behaviour of Yankuba who asked his driver and security detail to return home with the vehicle without him because he would travel in another Council Member's car to see Jammeh off. This is narrated by Ensa Meny
156. Pa Mbye testified that Koro was seen in the company of Yankuba and Edward at the Airport after the event standing beside his official vehicle, which was apparently blocked by both Yankuba and Edward's vehicle. It was reported that Yankuba then left with Koro in the latter's vehicle and Edward followed suit in his own vehicle.⁸⁸ Thereafter, they proceeded to Yankuba's house with Koro.
157. The unusual large presence of other vehicles outside Yankuba's house. Ndure and Jangum stated that when they separately returned to the house initially, they saw a fleet of cars

88 Testimony of Pa Habibou Mbye Transcription, Page 34-35, para751-793.

outside Yankuba's house which implies that there were other people there. Jangum and Ndure both spotted Edward Singhatey inside the premises which Jangum mentioned was unusual at that time of night; and that he asked them to go back on patrol again. These testimonies corroborate the testimony of Edward's personal guards Fatty and Marong who place Edward at the house of Yankuba Touray on that day.

158. Kanyi's direct eyewitness account not only places him (Edward) and his co-perpetrators at the scene but also directly participating in the murder. Also, like Yankuba's actions in removing everyone from his house, Edward also did not want any additional people tagging along to witness the events that were about to occur at Yankuba's house. However, despite these precautions, a number of people place Edward at the scene of the murder including his own personal guards.
159. Although there are some discrepancies about the details of the patrol in the testimonies of the guards, it is not in dispute that they all left the house to go on a wild goose patrol and when they returned, they found the house in a different state than they left it. The testimony of Jangum about going to Ebou Jallow's house after their patrol is also corroborated by Jallow who wrote an article stating that on the day Koro was killed, they (Edward and his co-perpetrators) "fooled the guards". This article is mentioned in Mendy's testimony who testified that, that was when he realized that they were sent out of the house for the purpose of murdering Koro.
160. Pa Mbye receives a call from an informer (Cham) in the early hours of the morning informing him that he had seen one of the black Mercedes Benz allocated to ministers followed by a blue four wheel drive car driving along the Sukuta Highway towards Jambur. It was strange to see such movement at that hour of the morning.⁸⁹
161. The hunter Wuyeh Sima sees a fleet of cars come to the bridge at Jambur. Some people alight and set one of the cars alight and get into their other cars and leave. Sima the hunter from Jambur indicated that he saw a fleet of big and small vehicles been driven near the Jambur forest and about six (6) men got down and set the smaller vehicle alight.⁹⁰ Koro's vehicle and charred remains were found in that same location.

THE KILLING OF KORO

162. Kanyi testified that prior to their arrival, Peter Singhatey had arrived and strategically positioned himself somewhere in the house. Koro was then led down a corridor in Yankuba's house and then ambushed first by Peter Singhatey who viciously struck him with a pestle three times as blood splattered everywhere. Edward Singhatey then identified him as the one he had earlier referred to as the "cunt." Edward himself and then Yankuba, Kanyi and the others hit Koro with a piece of firewood in a gruesome and brutal attack until Koro died. He, BK Jatta, Tumbul Tamba, Pa Alieu Gomez all participated. Koro's lifeless body was later lifted and placed in his own private vehicle that he travelled in from the Airport to Yankuba's residence. Edward, Yankuba and

89 Pa Habibou Mbye 11 April 2019, Page 28-29 para, 614- 617,626-627
90 TRRC Statement of Wuyeh Sima dated 14th January 2020

Peter left the residence with Koro’s body and left them behind to clean up the mess but Kanyi did not know where the Junta members went and he never saw the body again.⁹¹ The graphic and detailed confession of **Kanyi as to the brutal murder of Koro cannot be made up and is cogent and credible as it is supported by other circumstantial evidence.**

163. **After the murder took place, the body, blood and other evidence was removed from the scene. Yankuba’s driver, guards and orderlies later returned home to Yankuba’s residence and Jangum testified that upon their return, he saw a fleet of about four big and small vehicles parked outside the compound and he saw Edward come out of the house and he stood near the flowers, smoking. He noticed that he had an American camouflage uniform on but it was wet and his shoes were muddy.**⁹² Not only did **Jangum see Edward** at the scene of the murder, but he also observed his behavior and the state of his uniform which was wet and muddy. This testimony also corroborates **Mendy’s testimony about Yankuba’s uncomfortable and suspicious behavior, and the state of his uniform, which was “wet, dirty, muddy and also had burnt marks”.**⁹³ *These testimonies from Jangum and Mendy, who testified that they saw Edward and a fleet of cars at Yankuba’s house on that day, also corroborates the evidence from Sima.*
164. **Kanyi and several other witnesses including, Bojang and Pa Mbye also stated that after the murder, they saw Peter with a bandaged hand from a suspected burn wound suggesting, that he sustained the burns as he burnt Koro’s vehicle.**⁹⁴ From the evidence of Bojang and Sima it can be surmised that an accelerant was used to start or fuel the fire that burnt Koro’s body and vehicle. **This is plausible considering that it was raining and wet at the time when they tried to light the fire.**
165. These testimonies about the vehicles found in the forest, the weather condition and the fact that **Koro’s vehicle was burnt also corroborates the stories of Jangum and Mendy about the condition of Edward and Yankuba’s uniforms.**
166. **Kanyi testified that they cleaned up all the blood after the murder. Ndure stated that when he returned home with Mendy, he noticed that after all the cars had dispersed and the house was now empty but it was not in its normal clean state but left in a filthy manner and giving off a foul odour, which was suspicious**⁹⁵. In all the two years that he had been posted to the house he had never seen it like that. **Ndure’s testimony was corroborated by Mendy who also testified that when they returned to Yankuba’s house after the patrol that night, he noticed that the house was in a different state from the way he left it. He described the state of the house as “wet, muddy, dirty, messy and disorganized.” He also indicated that he had left the house in a clean state.**⁹⁶
167. **Ndure further said his suspicion was later confirmed when he learned over the radio, the next day that Koro died in an accident. As there was a rumour that the Junta members**

91 Testimony of Alhagie Kanyi, 28 February 2019, , pages 49 to 50 para 1100 - 1110
 92 Testimony of Amet Jangum, 28 March 2019, pages 18 – 19 lines 388 - 407
 93 Testimony of Ensa Mendy, 28 March 2019, pages 52 – 54 lines 1125 -1219
 94 Testimony of Alhagie Kanyi, 28 February 2019, pages 54- 55; para 1210 to 1222, testimony of Pa Habibou Mbye, 11 April 2019, pages 30 -31, 653- 667, Testimony of Muhammed L.K. Bojang, 11 April 2019, pages 14- 16 para 298- 335
 95 Testimony of Lamin Ndure 25th June 2019, Page 35, Para 770-777.
 96 Testimony of Ensa Mendy, 28 March 2019, pages 50 – 51, para 1121 - 1145

were responsible for his death, he came to the conclusion that **Yankuba and Edward** were responsible for his death and he believed that was the reason why he was asked to take away the family and the guards from the house.

168. The direct and circumstantial evidence received by the Commission point to the conclusion that **Koro was killed by Edward Singhatey and Yankuba Touray and Peter Singhatey at Yankuba’s house along with Alhagie Kanyi, Tumbul Tamba, Pa Alieu Gomez and BK Jatta. After they had killed him, they placed his body in his own vehicle, and drove it to Jambur, accompanied by the fleet of vehicles seen outside Yankuba’s house, where the vehicle was burnt with Koro’s body inside and then left there to appear as though Koro had died in an accident.**
169. After members of the public and the police visited the scene of the accident, **Koro’s charred corpse was removed from the burnt vehicle and taken to the mortuary where members of his family are able to view it. Bajen testified that she had no way of identifying the remains as Koro’s** because it was charred beyond recognition.
170. At the accident scene the police investigators – **Momodou Bojang and Pa Mbye were able to establish that the accident was stage managed. There were no skid marks or evidence of a collision. The car only had a small dent in front. The fire did not affect the number plate meaning that the fire was also man made. Something was poured on the car to set it ablaze.**
171. There was no evidence of **Koro trying to escape from the blazing car. He just sat still and allowed himself to be burnt. Indicating that the person in the car was not alive.**
172. The evidence pointing to the conspiracy or common plan to commit **Koro’s murder at Yankuba’s house by Edward, Yankuba and Peter and the actual carrying out of same by them together with their subordinates is quite compelling taking into consideration the strength of the confession of Kanyi and the evidence. However, the participation of Yahya Jammeh and other members of the Junta is more subtle. The Commission has sufficient evidence to suggest that although the other members of the Junta did not directly participate in Koro’s murder they were either aware of or contributed to the pre-meditated plan to get rid of him or became aware after the fact, but did not protest.**
173. It has been established from the direct evidence of Kanyi , who admits to taking part in the murder of Koro ,and the compelling circumstantial evidence that the persons who directly participated in the murder of Koro were the following:-
- **Edward Singhatey**
 - **Peter Singhatey**
 - **Yankuba Touray**
 - **Alagie Kanyi**
 - **BK Jatta**
 - **Tumbul Tamba(deceased)**
 - **Pa Alieu Gomez**

COVER UP OF THE KILLING BY PERPETRATORS AND THE STATE

184. **Chairman Jammeh** assured **Koro's** family *“that no stone will be left unturned”*⁹⁷ in investigating **Koro's** death. No investigations were conducted and the Police who tried to conduct the investigations on their own – **Pa Mbye** and **Bojang** were thwarted in their efforts. **Bojang** had no cooperation from his team He did not receive an autopsy report, fire report, nor the photos that were taken by police photographer, **Alieu Njie** (deceased) at the scene. He had no documentation to open the case file. The only thing contained in the file was a narration of the investigations he conducted. He put the file on *“sine die.”* **Pa Mbye** was dismissed and **Kaba Bajo** was asked to go gently on the case. He denies that this happened.
185. **Bajo** testified that after the President's declaration to get to the bottom of **Koro's** death and investigate the case, he gave instructions to the IGP **Gibril Joof** accordingly. Even though he followed up with the IGP severally he got no results. All he could get from IGP when he enquired about progress is *“that they were still on it”* and the respective units have not yet reported to him on any leads to the investigation. He did everything he could have done for the matter to be investigated but he came to a dead end. In his opinion he believed that as Minister he had fully discharged his responsibility to the best of his ability to investigate or cause the matter regarding his fellow Minister to be investigated. However, he agreed that he did not put pressure on the Police to investigate because he assumed that it was an accident and there was no pressure from the Cabinet Colleagues regarding the incident.⁹⁸
186. When the TRRC investigators spoke to **Mr. Joof**, he said he received no such instructions from **Kaba Bajo**. In view of the fact that **Mr. Joof** completely denies **Bajo's** claim about ordering an investigation and the fact that there was also no meaningful investigation, it can be concluded that **Bajo** as Minister of Interior did not push for an investigation.
187. From the perspective of the family the following are enough evidence of a cover up: (i) They were never officially informed about **Koro's** death even though the public had got wind of it and were calling the house meaning that the authorities knew but failed in their duty to inform the family. (ii) When **Jammeh** promised the family that no stone would be left unturned her aunt asked: *“do we expect the killers to do justice?”* They never got justice. (iii) When the family went to the mortuary they were told that **Koro's** father had given instructions that no one should be allowed to go in to see the remains of **Koro**. This was false. Who gave the order and why are unknown. (iv) When **Bajen** asked **Jammeh** who killed **Koro**? His response was that we did not kill him. The **Jawara** regime did. This was a deliberate attempt to draw attention away from the real killers. (v) **Koro's** failure to turn up at the family home as he always did and the fact that they knew that he had no business in **Jambur**. (vi) No family member was ever questioned about the death of **Koro**.

97 Testimony of **Bajen Ceesay Jaiteh**, testified on 17 April 2019

98 Testimony of **Lamin Kaba Bajo**, testimony of 16 April 2019 1388-1542

188. There was no attempt to dispel the rumours particularly about **Peter Singhatey's** burnt hand. Despite being aware of the rumours in town accusing them of **Koro's** murder which should have clearly motivated them to clear their names especially in such a high-profile criminal case. Their lack of will to find the true perpetrators to the crime suggests that they carried out the crime. The question remains, why did the Junta obstruct the investigation? Why, in the face of all the rumours and the public accusations by **Ebou Jallow** in the **Gambia** and other online platforms, did the Junta not clear public doubt as to their involvement?
189. **Wuyeh Sima** also indicated in his statement that no one including the investigators were interested in the crucial information he had about the accident and in fact he was victimized after that resulting in loss of his job and due to the harassment he sustained, he later had to flee the country in fear for his life. All these also point to government efforts to frustrate and obstruct the investigation.

CONTRADICTIONS AND DISCREPANCIES IN THE TESTIMONIES OF WITNESSES

190. Despite the strong evidence showing the Junta's and/or **Edward Singhatey**, **Yankuba Touray** and **Peter Singhatey's** culpability in the murder of **Ousman Koro Ceesay** there are some contradictions in the evidence against them some of which **Edward** attempted to use to discredit them during his testimony. **Jangum** said that they drove when they went on the first patrol mission, without arms and were in mufti. They walked the second time. **Ensa Mendy** on the other hand, said that they drove, wore uniform and carried arms. **Lamin Ndure** testified that after he dropped the guards at the beach for patrol, he then returned home with **Mendy**. These inconsistencies and contradictory statements are immaterial and do not go to the heart of the issue of culpability. **Demba Njie** said that **Yahya Jammeh** never discussed the **Koro** incident with him while they were in **Addis Ababa**. **Kaba Bajo** said There is sufficient evidence against **Edward Singhatey**, **Yankuba Touray**, **Peter Singhatey** and **Yahya Jammeh** as perpetrators in the murder of **Koro Ceesay**

LEGAL INSTRUMENTS INFORMING THE CASE

191. The TRRC draws inspiration from Article 28 of the Rome Statute that states that a military commander or person acting as military commander shall be criminally responsible for crimes [within the jurisdiction of the court] committed by forces under his or her failure to exercise control properly over such forces where:⁹⁹
- a. Article 28¹⁰⁰ Responsibility of commanders and other superiors
 - b. In addition to other grounds of criminal responsibility under this Statute for crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court:
 - (a) A military commander or person effectively acting as a military commander shall be criminally responsible for crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court committed by forces under his or her effective command and control, or effective authority

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Article 24 of The Rome Statute; Non-retroactivity *ratione personae* www.icc-cpi.int
Rome Statute – International Criminal Court www.icc-cpi.int

and control as the case may be, as a result of his or her failure to exercise control properly over such forces, where: That military commander or person either knew or, owing to the circumstances at the time, should have known that the forces were committing or about to commit such crimes; and

(ii) That military commander or person failed to take all necessary and reasonable measures within their power to prevent or repress their commission or submit the matter to the competent authorities for investigation and prosecution.

(b) With respect to superior and subordinate relationships not described in paragraph (a), a superior shall be criminally responsible for crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court committed by subordinates under his or her effective authority and control, as a result of his or her failure to exercise control properly over such subordinates, where:

The superior either knew or consciously disregarded information that indicated that the subordinates were committing or about to commit such crimes;

(ii) The crimes concerned activities that were within the effective responsibility and control of the superior; and

(iii) The superior failed to take all necessary and reasonable measures within his or her power to prevent or repress their commission or submit the matter to the competent authorities for investigation and prosecution.

192. Going by the customary international law rules on command responsibility, it is clear that **Yahya Jammeh** did not investigate or punish the alleged perpetrators of the murder of **Ousman Koro Ceesay** even though he knew fully well that his colleagues were alleged to have committed the crime. On this basis and on the rules of command responsibility, he ought to be held responsible for the crime.

6. FINDINGS

THE COMMISSION FINDS THAT:

1. **Ousman Koro Ceesay** was a man of honour, dignity and integrity who was committed to transformational development of his country based on these attributes was appointed Minister of Finance and member of the AFPRC in March 1995.
2. On the issue of **Edward Singhatey** being jealous of **Ousman Koro Ceesay** at a minimum there was bad blood between **Edward** and **Koro**. Considering the growing influence **Koro** began to have in Cabinet and him getting closer to **Yahya Jammeh**, there is credibility in the conclusion that **Edward Singhatey** felt threatened by the popularity of the rising star and he became jealous of **Koro**. Up to the time of **Koro** joining the Council **Edward Singhatey** and **Yahya Jammeh** had enjoyed a very close relationship noted in their connivance to get

rid of **Sanna Sabally** and **Saidibu Hydara**. **Edward** was a principal architect of the July 22 coup and was a highly intelligent and accomplished member of the Council. **Koro's** growing stature within the Council posed a threat to **Edward's** influence and position as Vice Chairman and thus he had a personal motive to kill him

3. **Koro's** progressive ideologies, as far as the **Junta** was concerned, threatened the direction of the **Junta** and **Jammeh**. They were used to giving orders and having the orders obeyed without question. Therefore, cumulatively, **Koro's** independent position and critical thinking unsettled **Jammeh** and this gave him a motive to eliminate him. The Commission takes into account the testimonies of various credible witnesses about how **Jammeh** dealt with people that he believed were obstacles to his objectives following the 1994 coup.

4. On the balance of probabilities, it is more likely that the version proffered by the majority of the witnesses is the real version of events because, not only are they credible, but they also corroborate each other's testimonies. The strong character evidence in favour of **Koro** demonstrates that he was unlikely to engage in anything untoward, because of his stubborn convictions, which would prompt him to expose the Junta. The Junta had a motive to silence him properly and permanently as alluded to by **Attorney General Marong** and **Pa Mbye** in their testimonies. The statement by **Yahya Jammeh** to his Cabinet that they could have easily dismissed **Koro** from office if they were unhappy with his work would have been a temporary and risky solution to the problem as there were no guarantees that he would not expose them in the future.

5. Immediately after arrival in Addis Ababa, the information provided by **Yahya Jammeh** to his delegation demonstrates his knowledge of what was going on in The Gambia.

6. There was general indifference on the part of the AFPRC Junta to the death of **Koro** and an unwillingness to investigate it.

7. Not only was **Yahya Jammeh** aware of the circumstances leading to the death of **Ousman Koro Ceesay** but there was a deliberate state sanctioned effort to suppress the truth about **Koro's** death. This leads back to the question, would the Junta members prevent investigations into **Koro's** death if they had nothing to do with his murder? From these facts, the Commission draws the conclusion that at least three Junta members – **Yahya Jammeh**, **Edward Singhatey** and **Yankuba Touray** together with **Peter Singhatey** not only conspired and carried out the murder of **Koro**, but actively covered up the murder and prevented proper and effective investigations from taking place despite the fact that **Yahya Jammeh** and others knew about the rumours accusing the Junta of **Koro's** death.

8. The substantially corroborated evidence of the staff of **Edward Singhatey** (**Fatty** and **L.S. Marong**), the staff of **Yankuba Touray** (**Ndure** and **Jangum**) and **Alagie Kanyi** (who at the time was working under **Peter Singhatey** at the Training School) is a very convincing and compelling account of the truth of what happened, as opposed to the uncorroborated version of **Edward's**.

9. **Edward Singhatey** offered no further evidence to support his alibi which, in addition, gives the Commission sufficient reasons to conclude that the evidence overwhelmingly places **Edward Singhatey, Yankuba Touray** and **Peter Singhatey** at the crime scene at **Yankuba Touray's** residence on that fateful night, and points to them as the architects and perpetrators of **Koro's** assassination.
10. **Edward Singhatey's** suggestion that **Koro** was killed by the MFDC rebels was rebutted by the MFDC leader Salif Sadio, in a T.V interview, responding to **Edward's** claims.
11. After the events of November 11, 1994 **Kanyi** regularly met **Edward** at his residence where they would drink alcohol together to help **Kanyi** drown his guilt. The Commission is of the view that the statement by **Edward** in his defense is a very weak and unconvincing attempt to extricate himself from responsibility for the crime alleged and is aimed at misleading the Commission.
12. It is more by design than by coincidence in that (a) **Tumbul Tamba**, who the Commission learns worked at State House and became a close **Jammeh** killer, participated in the crime; (b) that **Edward Singhatey's** orderly and driver (**Fatty** and **LS Marong**) dropped him at the crime scene at **Yankuba Touray's** house; (c) that **Yankuba Touray's** guards and driver (**Jangum, Ndure** and **Mendy**) removed all the people in **Yankuba's** house to clear the way for the crime to be carried out there without the presence of potential witnesses; and (d) **Alagie Kanyi**, was a direct subordinate of **Peter Singhatey** working at the time as an instructor at the Gambia National Army Training School to which **Peter Singhatey** was the Commander. The fact that all the above contributors to the crime allegedly had a direct connection with the architects and perpetrators of **Ousman Koro Ceesay's** murder also strengthens the evidence that **Yahya Jammeh, Edward Singhatey, Yankuba Touray** and **Peter Singhatey**, together with their subordinates **Alagie Kanyi, Pa Alieu Gomez, Tumbul Tamba** and **B.K. Jatta**, planned and carried out the assassination of **Koro**.
13. **Kanyi** was so terrified of **Edward** and his brother **Peter** who were by far his superiors to the extent that he would not dare implicate them in such a gruesome and dastardly assassination if they did not do it. Additionally, in spite of all the things he did, **Kanyi** is a reasonable person and would stand to gain nothing from implicating himself in a crime that he did not commit. **Kanyi's** conduct can therefore, only be explained by the fact that he was motivated by his desire to tell the truth and to reveal the facts about the death of **Ousman Koro Ceesay**.
14. **Kanyi** had participated in the November 11, 1994 killings and the Junta members were aware of the role that he played in it. They used this to hold sway over him.
15. The testimony of **Kanyi** is credible and that he indeed went to **Yankuba's** house and they participated in the murder of **Koro**. The Commission believes that **Kanyi** could not have described **Yankuba's** house so accurately if he had never been there. As such, the Commission finds the testimony of **Kanyi** credible and that he indeed went to **Yankuba's** house and they participated in the murder of **Ousman Koro Ceesay**.

16. The Commission shares the belief of the **Attorney General Marong** and also concludes that for **Edward Singhatey** to mention *murder* when he did not suggest so and then conclude against his own former assertions of murder that it was an accident was very suspicious under the circumstances and suggests that he had personal foreknowledge of the incident.
17. **Edward Singhatey** has much to gain from his denials to avoid being implicated or associated with the brutal and gruesome murder of **Ousman Koro Ceesay**, because he has managed to polish his image from his days in the army to a clean, accomplished lawyer and statesman, and that is the image he wants Gambians to have of him. He readily accepted collective responsibility for the atrocities of November 11, 1994 even though he denied individual responsibility. This shows that he did not mind being associated with that event, because it was more acceptable and justifiable to the public, in his view, to be part of the resistance to quell a coup attack from dangerous armed soldiers which is treason rather than being seen as participating in the murder of an innocent civilian, a fellow Council and cabinet member.
18. The statement by **Attorney General Marong** who testified that he was present when **Yahya Jammeh** ordered **Bajo** to go slow/quietly on the investigations, and even though **Mr. Bajo** denied this, his confession of neglect/failure to have a proper investigation conducted suggests that the statement of **AG Marong** is more in line with the truth. The Commission makes this finding because if **Yahya Jammeh** had genuinely ordered an investigation, all the relevant offices and their personnel would have ensured that a full investigation was conducted. This finding is reinforced by the fact that the matter was hardly discussed at Cabinet. More significantly, officers who attempted to conduct investigations were sacked from their jobs and no Coroner's inquest was instituted.
19. In the case of **Yankuba Touray**, the matter has been dealt with by the High Court on Wednesday July 14, 2021 where he was found guilty of killing **Koro Ceesay** and sentenced him to death by hanging by Justice Jaiteh. In addition he told the courtroom that Touray had ensured that no investigation was carried out after the murder and that the victim's body was "*burnt beyond recognition*".
20. In terms of evidence received from **Alagie Kanyi** that he was contacted by **Yankuba Touray** and **Fatoumatta Jahumpa Ceesay** urging him not to cooperate with the Commission, the Commission finds that this conduct amounts to tampering with a potential TRRC witness in relation to a case in which he was involved. The Commission holds that this is consciousness of guilt on the part of **Yankuba Touray**, which further demonstrates his involvement in the assassination of **Koro**.
21. From the above, the Commission finds that **Ousman Koro Ceesay** was murdered in a planned assassination by members of the Junta and their subordinates at the official residence of **Yankuba Touray** on the night of **Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh's** travel to Addis Ababa in Ethiopia to attend the A.U Summit in June 1995.
22. The evidence before the Commission completely discredits any notion that **Koro's** Mercedes Benz vehicle was involved in an accident, which caused it to catch fire, and reinforces the

- finding of the Commission that **Koro's** body was deliberately burnt in his vehicle in order to conceal the nature and manner of his killing.
23. Some of the reasons ruling out an actual accident are outlined by the testimonies of the investigators – including **M.K. Bojang** and **Pa Habibou Mbye** and other witnesses – who concluded that there were signs of the accident being framed or staged to look real.
 24. In addition to the above, the description by the witnesses of what they saw on each of the perpetrators also indirectly connects them to the crime. For instance, with regard to **Edward Singhatey**, both **Ndure** and **Jangum** saw him in the garden of **Yankuba Touray's** house during the night of the murder. When **Jangum** saw him, he noticed that his boots were wet and muddy. This evidence supports the suggestion that at the relevant time, **Edward** went to a place that was wet and muddy. The weather conditions prevailing at the forest where **Koro's** body was burnt, as described by **Sima**, was that the place was wet. This evidence suggests that **Edward** may have been to the scene where **Koro's** vehicle was burnt. As for **Yankuba Touray**, **Ensa Mendy** claims that when he returned to the house, he saw **Yankuba's** uniform on the floor and it was wet and had some burns. This was the same uniform **Yankuba** wore during the day, and it had no burns before that time. The Commission finds that this is very likely a result of **Yankuba's** involvement in the burning of **Koro's** body inside his vehicle. As for **Peter Singhatey**, several witnesses testified that soon after the death of **Koro**, they saw his left arm in bandages. Amid rife rumours at the time that **Peter's** arm was burnt from the incident. Again, this is also consistent with burns that was more likely to have been sustained from participation in the burning of **Koro's** body in his vehicle.
 25. There is significant circumstantial evidence involving **Edward**, **Yankuba** and **Peter** in the burning of **Koro's** vehicle and therefore in his murder. They tried to cover up their crime by burning the vehicle.
 26. The Commission believes **Kanyi's** story and finds that because of the oath of secrecy taken by the perpetrators at **Edward's** residence two days after the murder of **Koro**, it is not surprising that the real story about the killing of **Koro** was never confirmed by any one of the perpetrators or the witnesses until the hearings of the TRRC began.
 27. Although it is suggested that **Koro** might have been killed as result of the sharing of parts of the money received from Taiwan by the military members of the Junta which implicates **Kaba Bajo** and **Ebou Jallow**, the Commission does not have sufficient evidence on this issue to ground a finding on their culpability or involvement in the murder. It is simply plausible that **Bajo's** act of neglecting to conduct an investigation was more a show of loyalty to **Jammeh** and not complicity in the murder. As such, the Commission makes no further finding on the possible complicity of **Bajo** and **Jallow** in this matter due to lack of evidence on the matter.
 28. Premised on the evidence presented before the commission, it can be concluded that **Yahya Jammeh**, **Edward Singhatey**, **Yankuba Touray**, **Peter Singhatey**, **Pa Alieu Gomez**, **BK Jatta**, **Tumbul Tamba** and **Alhagie Kanyi** are responsible for the murder of **Ousman Koro Ceesay**.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Taking the totality of the evidence as a whole, the Commission recommends the prosecution of **Yahya Jammeh**, **Edward Singhatey**, **Yankuba Touray** and **Peter Singhatey** for their role in the premeditated murder of **Ousman Koro Ceesay** and also subverting the course of justice by covering up their crime.
2. **Yankuba Touray** for his part has already been indicted for the murder of **Koro Ceesay** in his individual capacity and was convicted of the murder of **Koro** the High Court of The Gambia on 14th July 2021. As such, no recommendation is made against him.
3. Thus, for the low level perpetrators such as **Alagie Kanyi**, **BK Jatta**, **Pa Alieu Gomez**, the Commission notes that they may qualify amnesty under the provisions of the Act.
4. For low level perpetrators such as **Alagie Kanyi**, **BK Jatta**, **Pa Alieu Gomez** in the event that they are granted amnesty, the Commission recommends that they are banned from holding public office for a minimum period of 10 years.
5. The National Assembly should be given the power to initiate investigations into interference of the executive in the exercise of their constitutional powers.

