

Kwara: Abducted Monarch Dies In Captivity



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The traditional ruler of Olayinka community in Ifelodun Local Government Area of Kwara State, Oba Salman Olatunji Aweda, has reportedly died while in the custody of his abductors.

The community had made several efforts to secure release of the monarch who was abducted last month.

A former member of the Kwara State House of Assembly from Ifelodun, who does not want his name in print, told this medium that “a victim who was recently released by the same group of kidnappers in Sagbe after the payment of ransom initially informed the community about his death and to stop further possible extortion by the bandits.”

The abductors were said to have demanded ₦21 million in cash, two brand-new motorcycles, and a jerrycan of petrol as conditions for the monarch’s release.

But despite meeting the reported demands, his captors allegedly continued to hold on to him until his reported death.

It was not immediately clear what caused the death of the traditional ruler before the filing of this report on Monday night.

In a voice clip shared on the community platform, a member believed to be part of the committee informed residents of the development, despite efforts by family members and several other stakeholders to secure his release.

The member said Janazah prayers would still be conducted in accordance with Islamic tradition despite the development.

The development was initially met with uncertainty from authorities but was later confirmed by community leadership, who said all efforts to bring the monarch home ended in tragedy despite payments and concessions made to the abductors.

Earlier, the Kwara State Police Command had expressed doubt over reports of the monarch’s death.

The Commissioner of Police, in a reaction to Daily Trust, described the information as unverified, saying: “I think it’s a rumour.”

Similarly, the Chairman of Ifelodun Local Government Area, Hadji Femi Yusuf, also told this newspaper that he had not received any official briefing on the matter.

“I am not aware of that. I don’t know where they got that information and I have not been formally informed as the chairman of the council. I cannot confirm what I don’t know,” he said.

However, the council’s traditional institution later confirmed the monarch’s death during a telephone chat with our reporter.

The Secretary of the Ifelodun Traditional Council, Elder Chief Omisola Amos Olayinka, said the community had received internal confirmation of the monarch’s death after initial disbelief.

“Initially, we thought it was a rumour. But now the community confirmed it today... those that we put in charge of farm duty of the community put it on our platform that the monarch is dead, has passed away,” he said during a telephone interview with Daily Trust.

He explained that efforts were made to secure the monarch’s release, including the payment of ransom and provision of additional demands reportedly made by the kidnappers.

“We paid a huge sum of money including motorcycles and fuel as demanded by them yet the man still died in their custody. We are in a mourning mood now,” he said.

The secretary further lamented the inability of the community to locate the monarch’s remains, noting the uncertainty surrounding where he was taken after his abduction.

Asked if the community had received the corpse, Olayinka said: “No, no, no, we haven’t. And where do you trace the corpse when you don’t even know where the man was taken to? How do you trace it? At least not yet.”

He added: “The community is in a very sad mood now, this is a man that was just given a first class status and we have not even done the ceremony, yet the man is dead. There is nothing we can do but we pray that such things doesn’t happen again.

In recent months, Kwara State has continued to grapple with security challenges, particularly in rural communities where cases of kidnapping and bandit-related attacks have persisted despite government interventions and increased security deployments.

Authorities have stepped up patrols and intelligence operations in affected areas, but incidents of abductions still raise concern among residents.

Communities across Ifelodun and neighbouring local government areas have remained on edge, with farmers, traditional leaders, and travellers frequently targeted.

While the government maintains that efforts are ongoing to strengthen security and restore normalcy, residents continue to call for more sustained protection and quicker response to distress situations.