

Toxic waste kills three in Ondo forest

By Oluwaseun

Akingboye, Akure

07 September 2020 |
3:37 am



Families of three persons allegedly killed by toxic waste discharged into a pit in Omotosho Forest Reserve in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State have demanded justice.

They accused a Chinese manufacturing firm operating in the area, WeWood Company, of recklessness and insensitivity to the people in its area of operation.

The casualties, Mr Monday Akinmusire (35), Mr Samuel Louis (45) and Adebowale Ododolewa (19), were wood felling operators who died in the course of duty on September 2 at Omotosho Okefara forest.

The Guardian gathered that the trio had gone to the forest reserve to fell trees and cut them to size for sale as usual, but met their untimely death.

Louis, a father of four, was a contractor and wood merchant, while Akinmusire, a father of five, was an operator of the saw machine used in felling and cutting trees to size. The third victim, a teenager, Ododolewa, who was writing the ongoing West African Senior School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE), was the helper.

Younger brother to the wood merchant, Emmanuel Akinmusire, recounted that his brother hired the duo to fell trees in the forest reserve, but never returned home at Akinfosile community. He disclosed that the victims went to the forest to fell trees as usual, but when they didn't return at the normal time, the community raised a search team to look for them in the forest.

According to him, they saw the motorcycle on which the three of them rode to work where it was parked. They called out their names, but no one answered. Akinmusire revealed that when they entered the forest, they saw some people who were felling and cutting trees. He added that they enquired from them but to no avail.



Sequel to a fruitless search, they went back to the community to report to the community leader, the Olufara of Akinfosile, Oba Olamide Ayodele, who instituted a new search team.



Hauwa Ojeifo honoured with inaugural Marca Bristo Fellowship

1 hour ago

Oba Ayodele was said to have contacted the Divisional Police Officer, the Vigilante Corps and the Amotekun Corps and informed them about the development, and a new search team went back into the forest.

Akinmusire disclosed that the officers with some youths of the community went into the forest reserve the following day and stumbled on their bodies covered with black substance. Emmanuel, who went into the forest with them, said they saw a big pit surrounded by heap of sand believed to have been excavated from the pit.

“We saw that a part of the sand had been washed off by the toxic waste discovered to have been discharged into the pit. The toxic waste overflowed the pit and flowed down the slope where the trio were working and submerged them.

“The bodies of the victims were seen on the flowing track of the toxic waste which killed them instantly as there were no sign that they attempted to struggle with death,” he said.

The bereaved pointed out that with the joint operations of all security agencies and the community youths, the bodies of the victims were evacuated and deposited in a private morgue in Ore. He noted that when youths in the community realised that they were killed by toxic waste generated by the Chinese company, which is into cassava to ethanol processing, they protested to the company to alert them about the incident.

A brother-in-law to the late Louis, Omololu Akinseye, disclosed that the Ondo State government leased the forest to the Chinese company to clear and replant trees.

Akinseye noted that the contract allowed saw millers and plank dealers to fell the existing trees in the forest but paid tax to government officials monitoring their activities.

While the state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Teo-Leo Ikoro, who confirmed the incident, said it was an accident as a result of the toxic waste that overflowed where it was discharged.



Police bans protest in Borno

20 mins ago

“There is a company producing ethanol in the area, Omotosho said, and it was an accident as a result of waste from the company. The bodies of the victims of the accident have been deposited in a morgue. But the company and the families of the victims are already talking and making arrangement on the matter. It was an accident,” he said.

In this article:

Monday Akinmusire

Toxic waste



Receive News Alerts on Whatsapp: [+2348136370421](https://wa.me/2348136370421)

No comments yet