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Man burnt to death in Ekiti

👤 Posted by: SULAIMAN SALAWUDEEN 📁 in Southwest 🕒 15 hours ago

The lynching of a kidnap suspect by an irate mob in Ikere-Ekiti, Ikere Local Government Area of Ekiti State, has thrown up issues about the growing tendency among the people to take the law into their hands, SULAIMAN SALAWUDEEN reports

Penultimate Sunday was a particularly bad day in Ikere-Ekiti, Ikere Local Government Area of Ekiti State, when an alleged kidnapper and ritualist was apprehended by the people and later set ablaze.

Time was 7.40 in the morning and the man (name unknown) reportedly in his 40s was sighted by a commercial motorcyclist emerging from a bush located at Eyitayo Housing Estate, Moshood area, Ikere-Ekiti.

On sighting the man, the motorcyclist was said to have made few frantic calls to residents around the area and the man was promptly arrested. He was said to be carrying, at the time, a black polythene bag containing what was described as a mutilated but fresh body of a boy whose age could not be ascertained.

The people reportedly forced the man back into the bush to know his actual mission where they saw objects which looked most like fresh human parts covered with fresh blood.

The mob which had now formed brought him out of the said bush again and then dealt him blows, using all manner of objects, before they took him to the local vigilance group called the Odua Peoples Congress (OPC), in the town.

But they (the mob) reportedly numbering about fifty seized him from the vigilance group, brought him to Odo-Oja main road, stripped him naked and while still in the unconscious state, heaped upon him about ten used tyres, doused all in petrol and in seconds, he was up in flames.

An eye witness had said the man had earlier been handed over to the Oodua Peoples Congress in the belief that they would 'deal' with him but "they schemed to protect and shield him."

"We were looking at them after he had been handed over. We expected he would be tortured but they (vigilance group members) did no such thing. They kept him there and wasted our time. At a point we got angry and we moved in and took him to the main road close to a bank and burnt him.

"Just last week, a kidnapper escaped here in this town with some collusion and support among certain elements. We did not want that to happen again. To catch a kidnapper and allow him to escape is the worst

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thing that can happen in a community. That criminal would return to perpetrate worse crime,” the eyewitness said.

While investigations are currently ongoing to bring perpetrators to justice and discourage a repeat of the act, The Nation investigations revealed that criminal activities like that were not unique to Ikere alone, other towns in Ekiti State, including Igede and Omuo have lately recorded such occurrences as well.

In Omuo-Ekiti, a 12-year-old girl sent by her mother on an errand was waylaid by suspected relative and killed for ritual purposes.

According to a source, the girl who was sent to deliver food to her grandmother was pursued and stopped by her mother’s brother as she was returning from her granny’s place. She was said to have been taken to a small house where she was killed and some parts of her body, including her brain removed The Omuo case was generally believed to be a case of ritual killing.

Police reaction

In a swift reaction, the State Police Commissioner, Felix Uyanna, condemned the burning of the suspect, saying it was unlawful for people to take laws into their hands, adding that “the Command will deal with whoever is found engaging in such.”

Mr Uyanna, while maintaining that the act “was regrettable and inhuman” said in a statement that the state police command “is dismayed at the ugly incident of mob attack/killing/burning of a yet to be identified citizen at Ikere.

“The supposed victim of the alleged crime is also unknown and that the flimsy excuse or suspicion of being a kidnapper if allowed is a recipe for anarchy, especially now that a major election is afoot.

“The Command hereby warns members of the public to desist from taking laws into their hands, rather reports of any incidents of commission of crime or any suspicion whatsoever should be made at the nearest police station as anyone arrested in connection with any lawless act will be made to face the full weight of the law,” Uyanna said.

While some of the suspects were said to have been arrested and making useful confessions, the fact according to the police remains that residents themselves have to support the police in securing the communities.

At a recent chat with journalists in the state, the Police Commissioner stressed that security had become everyone’s business and that people have to be interested in who is moving where and at whatever time.

While residents have continued to condemn the abandonment of Eyitayo Housing Estate, where the man was reportedly found, The Nation findings reveal that the estate used to be the site of a proposed central market when Ise, Emure, and Ilawe were still under Ikere Local Government about thirty-years ago.

According to a source, “The place at a time was being prepared for a large local market. But the local government failed to implement this before the separation of the council into Ise, Emure, Ilawe and Ikere local government areas.

A resident around the area said: “We have been having meetings in this place because of the tendency of criminals to use that place (Eyitayo Estate), but most times when decisions are taken, it would not be implemented.

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