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Killing of 39-yr-old sparks outrage

Posted by: Kunle AKINRINADE in News ⌚ 2 days ago

There was outrage over the killing of a 39-year-old, Jeje Oni, by suspected hoodlums penultimate Thursday in Ijoko community in Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State.

The deceased, according to sources, hardly missed his wife's meal in the afternoon. It was gathered that he would usually leave his shop on Railway Line road in Ijoko town, Ogun State, to eat his lunch at home with a couple of his friends. As usual, he left his shop to eat his lunch at home on January 8, 2015 but he met his tragic end on the road.

He was allegedly shot dead by some hoodlums a few meters away from his residence, thus ending his rendezvous with life. The killing of the Ekiti State-born man, who was said to be a fashion designer, came barely 17 days after the palace of a monarch in the town, Oba Ogunseye, was allegedly razed by some hoodlums suspected to be loyalists of another contender to the stool.

Oni's shop was located near the burnt palace, thus raising suspicions that he might have been singled out as one of the supporters of Ogunseye.

It was gathered that Oni was trailed by his assailants shortly after he left his shop on his motorbike in company with one of his friends to eat lunch at home near the Agoro area of Ijoko.

A friend of the deceased, who was riding with him, had to jump down from the motorbike and ran for his dear life following sporadic shooting by the hoodlums who were trailing him on their motorbike.

An impeccable source, who spoke in confidence, recalled: "I am one of the artisans that work in the neighbourhood and my workshop is close to the deceased's shop. Oni was fond of taking his friends home in the afternoon for his lunch because he did not eat out. About 3 pm on Thursday January 8, he received a call from his wife that his meal was ready and he asked me to join him for lunch at home. We left on his motorbike about 4.30pm for his residence in the Agoro area of Ijoko. When we got to Sawmill area, we noticed that some armed men were trailing us on a motorbike and he decided to speed off. It was while they started shooting at us as we sped off that I jumped off the bike and ran for my dear life.

"The hoodlums were shouting 'they are one of them, they are one of them.'" The shots the armed men fired missed me but sadly hit Oni's legs and that was when the assailants caught up with him and killed him. By the time I came out of hiding, a crowd had gathered round Oni's body and I had to report the incident to Sango Police Station, while I returned to the community to inform the people around our base about the incident.

"The late fashion designer owned a building in the Agoro area of Ijoko and he was an easy going person. The police have made some arrests and the matter has since been transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID), Elewera, Abeokuta," he added.

The killing of the man has, however, triggered an outrage as residents of the community condemned the activities of marauding youths suspected to be loyalists of a rival monarch in the community.

A resident, Amos Jimoh, who spoke with our correspondent, said: "The people behind the spate of violent attacks on Ijoko should be arrested and prosecuted once and for all. The killing of Oni came about two weeks after the palace of Ogunseye was razed suspectedly by loyalists of his rival, who also destroyed many buildings in the community. It is disheartening that the hoodlums succeeded in killing Oni minutes after he left his shop located near the Oba's palace. The law enforcement agents should be given a standing order to lay surveillance and deal with people who want to destabilise peace and harmony in this community.

"We thought there won't be another violent attack again following the burning down of the Oba's palace and

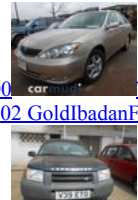
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
« Dec						

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- Archive 2 (articles before June 22nd 2010)
- Archive 3 (articles before April 16 2011)
- Archive 4 (articles between April 2011 and September 20, 2012)

the destruction of cars and buildings belonging to some village heads on December 23, 2014.The killing of Oni is condemnable and those who masterminded it should not be spared of the wrath of law. A situation whereby people and property are killed or destroyed is not acceptable and government should ask the police to step up action to stem the tide of violence and wanton destruction of lives and property,” said another resident, who asked not to be named.

In a telephone conversation with our correspondent, the spokesman of Ogun State Police Command, Mr Muiyiwa Adejobi, said a suspect is being held in the wake of the incident.

“We have arrested one Hakeem Oluomo and he is now in our custody. Although, we have not been able to establish his actual linkage with the killing of the deceased but we are holding the suspect for unlawful possession of fire arms.We are still investigating the matter, while our men have been deployed in the community to prevent destruction of lives and property.

It will be recalled that the thin line that held the peace of the community snapped on December 23, 2014 when suspected loyalists of a monarch were alleged to have attacked the palace of Oba Ogunseye. They were said to have set the palace ablaze and vandalised some vehicles belonging to some traditional chiefs of the town who were holding their meeting there.

Following the December attack, the spokesman of the Ogun State Police Command, Mr Muiyiwa Adejobi, in a statement had disclosed the arrest of about nine suspects and the recovery of arms and ammunition from the palace of the monarch, while the butt of a locally made gun was recovered from the palace of Oba Ogunseye.

The statement read in part: “Following the recent crises that rocked Ijoko town in Ado Odo/ Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State, the state police command has embarked on proper investigation by pouncing on the perpetrators of the crises that lasted for days and arrested nine suspects with arms and ammunition. The investigation prompted the police teams from the Department of Criminal Investigation and Police Mobile Force, coordinated by the Deputy Commissioner of Police(DCP) in charge of operations, Mr Egberebi Egbuson to conduct search and raids on the palaces and premises of the two disputing rulers, Oba Matanmi and Oba Ogunseye in the night of December 27,where nine suspects were arrested and 12 locally made single barreled guns,; two pump action guns,191 cartridges, two cutlasses, one axe, charms and masquerade clothing were recovered in the palace of Oba Matanmi and one butt of a locally made single barreled gun was recovered in the palace of Oba Ogunseye who has also been indicted by some suspects arrested in a case of shooting and wounding that occurred at a filing station in Agbado area of Ogun State on December 26, 2014.

“The command has given invitation letters to the two Obas for interrogation and proper investigation on their involvement in the crises that rocked the area for days.

“The suspects will soon appear in court after the investigation into the matter has been concluded with a view to finding a lasting solution to any act of violence and break down of law and order in the area and other parts of the state and to serve as a deterrent to those who are fond of creating crises on Obaship and land cases in Ogun State,” he added.

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