

Protest over killing of businessman

From Osagie Otabor, Benin

THERE were protests yesterday in Benin, the Edo State capital, over the alleged killing of a car dealer, Benson Obode.

Obode was allegedly killed by some policemen from Lagos State.

Obode was reportedly arrested on May 21 for allegedly buying a stolen vehicle and his whereabouts was said to have been kept secret from the family until July 27, when the police told some reporters in Lagos that he was dead.

The police said Obode died from what they called a "mob action" and that his body had been deposited at the Central Hospital's mortuary in Benin.

At the mortuary, it was learnt that the late Obode was brought to the hospital by a policeman identified as Corporal Oniyon Musa the day he was arrested.

The protesters, who stormed the premises of the House of Assembly, the Government House and the headquarters of the police command, said they wanted an independent autopsy to ascertain the cause of Obode's death.

The late Obode's elder brother, Solomon, said the police had not informed the family what happened to his brother since he was arrested.

Solomon said the N200,000 cash, phones and ATM cards belonging to his late brother were still missing.

He said the late car dealer was deposited at the morgue as Benson Agu instead of Benson Obode.

Solomon said: "Until now, they have not told the family anything. They broke the news to journalists in Lagos and not to the family. We don't know what happened to our brother. How could somebody you arrest be mobbed?"

"We saw him at the morgue that he was killed by torture and was shot. His landlord, who was also arrested, said my brother was tied and hung on a tree while blocks were placed on his chest.

"We have informed our lawyers. They have written to the Inspector-General of Police (IGP) and we are asking the police to produce our brother. They said he bought a stolen car. Who is the complainant? We do not know. How did he die? The police should tell the family what happened."