

FEDSARS operatives allegedly kill artisan over uncompleted job

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A tanker builder, Paul Hodewu aka Agbede has allegedly been killed by operatives of the Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (FEDSARS) in Ogun State, over his inability to complete a job given to him by a client.

The incident happened at about 2 p. m on Wednesday in the Ilashe area of Ipokia Local Government Area of the state.

According to sources, a man identified as Chief Ope contracted Hodewu to construct a tanker at a cost of N800, 000.

The said client gave Hodewu a sum of N600,000, leaving a balance of N200,000. The late artisan stopped work on the tanker because he had no money to complete the job.

Subsequently, Ope led four operatives of FEDSARS to Hodewu's workshop and demanded he completed the job or be arrested. The late artisan was taken to the palace of a monarch in Ilashe in order to settle the matter.

At the palace, Hodewu was said to have agreed to complete the work and demanded the payment of his balance, which Ope agreed to defray the next day. The meeting however ended on a tragic note when one of the FEDSARS operatives opened fire on Hodewu, killing him on the spot.

It was learnt that the incident was reported to Idiroko Police Division.

Hodewu's body has since been deposited in a public mortuary.

It was learnt that Ope has since bolted without a trace.

The incident led to an outrage as residents protested the killing, noting that FEDSARS operatives have been lately deployed by some unnamed affluent persons in the community to terrorise people.

The protest lasted several hours as angry residents demanded the removal of the community's monarch, who they also accused of complicity in the death of Hodewu.

Hodewu's colleagues in a local chapter of the Welders Association also protested the killing on the streets of Idiroko.

It took the intervention of monarchs from neighbouring communities to calm the protesters who vowed to raze the palace.

A resident, Adebowale Joshua said: “ It was a civil matter messed up by FEDSARS operatives. Why should armed policemen be used to harass an artisan over a job given to him?

“The policemen were brought to Agbede’s (Hodewu) residence by the aggrieved customer called Ope, who lives in Ilashe. They took him from his house to the palace of a monarch in Ilashe, who brokered peace between Ope and the late artisan. He (Hodewu) pleaded for more time to complete the job requesting the payment of his service charges (N200,000) and Ope promised to pay him the next day.

“While everyone at the palace were happy that the matter was amicably resolved, no one knows why one the policemen ‘hired’ by the aggrieved customer fired the shot that killed Hodewu on the spot.”

Another resident identified simply as Anthonio said SARS operatives are being hired by socialites in the community as security escorts to parties and social gatherings, during which the operatives fired shots indiscriminately to scare people all in the name of protecting their principals.

“ It is high time the police authorities did something to stop people from hiring policemen especially FEDSARS operatives to protect them at social functions and recovered their belongings especially landed property. In this local government area, it is common to find policemen serving as escorts to unscrupulous businessmen and socialites at social gatherings.”

The late artisan whose house on SS Road near the Ipokia General Hospital, also served as workshop is survived by his aged mother, two wives and children.

Police spokesman in the State, Mr Abimbola Oyeyemi, an Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) could not be reached for comments at press time.