

The killing of two youths by men of paramilitary groups and vigilante in the Sabo area of Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State has sparked a row between the community leaders, bereaved families, and police authorities, reports KUNLE AKINRINADE.

## Furore in Ogun community over killing of two youths

THREE months after they were allegedly killed in cold blood in Sabo area of Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State, residents, community leaders and bereaved families of Femi Ilori and Ibrahim Jamilu, a truck driver, have urged the police authorities to bring the culprits to justice.

The two youths were said to have been killed during a raid jointly carried out by the operatives of Amotekun, Oodua People's Congress (OPC) and some vigilance groups.

The father of one of the victims, Sunday Ilori, said the killers of his son were yet to be punished for the gruesome murder several weeks after two suspects were arrested for their complicity in the killings.

He said: "Femi Ilori is my third child. On the fateful day, I picked his mother from her shop, and when we got home, we met two persons including one of his mother's sisters at our residence.

"One of them was crying and they urged us to visit a police station at Igbeba area of Ijebu-Ode. On our way to the station, we learnt that Amotekun operatives were the ones that carried out the operation and we stopped their patrol vehicle to make enquiry only for the men to tell us that they had taken some persons they arrested during the raid to the Igbeba police division.

At the station, we could not see my son. And when I asked about my son, I was told that Femi had been killed and deposited at the morgue.

"I looked at his body and saw that his hands were fractured. On enquiry, I learnt that Amotekun operatives raided Sabo area and my son and several others who fled the scene for their safety were pursued and killed instead of being arrested.

"I was also told that a woman who tried to prevent the Amotekun operatives was also badly injured on her hand.

"We found that that they were actually looking for one Femi who they mistook my son for, and that by the time they dragged my son's body to the commander of Amotekun, he said that my son was not the Femi they were looking for.

"What I want is justice, because my son trained as a barber and was not a criminal and did not deserve the kind of gruesome death meted out to him by Amotekun corps.

"I want the police authorities to fish out my son's killers and prosecute them accordingly for their unprofessional conduct."

The chairman of the vigilante in Sabo, who spoke in confidence described the killings as unfortunate, said: "I wasn't around when the incident happened, but I learnt that the joint operations was carried out by over 100 operatives of Amotekun, Oodua People's Congress (OPC) and Vigilance Services of Nigeria (VGN) and So Safe Corps.

"Residents ran for their safety on sighting the operatives when they stepped out of their five operational vehicles, and Femi was one of those who fled on sighting the armed operatives.

"Unfortunately, the operatives pursued him to the house where he ran into and dragged him out before shooting him on his leg, leading to his death.

"Femi trained as barber, but until his death, he was an employee of a beer distributing firm at Sabo Motor Park in Ijebu-Ode. He had closed from duty and was returning home when he encountered the operatives who shot him three times near his home and



• Late Femi

• Late Jamilu

he died on the spot.

"I reported the matter to the Divisional Police Station at Obalande and it was in the course of that that the same operatives stormed the Sabo area where there are many Hausa and killed another youth there.

"The operatives responsible for the killings were later apprehended and transferred to the state police command at Eleweran, Abeokuta, and that was the last thing we heard about the case.

"A woman who is a neighbour to Femi was badly injured by the operatives, and she has spent over N300,000 on treatment.

"Although, the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) has visited bereaved families of the victims, it baffles me that paramilitary groups and outlawed ethnic militia are terrorising and killing innocent residents. Hence, I urged authorities to reprimand these people."

Jamilu's elder brother, Danjuma Ibrahim, said the incident happened on April 24, 2021. He explained that his younger brother was killed after he finished praying at a mosque close to their residence around 4 pm.

He said: "It was barely 30 minutes after he left home for prayers at a nearby mosque when we heard gunshots and one of my brother's friends rushed home to inform us that Jamilu had been killed by Amotekun men."

"I rushed to the scene but the Amotekun

**“He was dragged out and shot on the leg. I told one of the operatives that Femi is our neighbour and that we wanted to know the reason for his arrest only for the operative to hit my arm with the butt of his gun and I suffered a fracture”**

men and their allied groups asked me not to get close to his body, warning that they would shoot me too.

"I was told that he was running away when he, like other panicky residents, heard loud gunshots fired by the Amotekun operatives when they opened fire on him.

"We were invited by the DPO of Obalande and the Amotekun commander, who denied that his men were not involved in the incident. But he later opened up that a member of the allied team was responsible for the shooting and killing of the victims.

"The DPO later excused us and had a closed door meeting with the Amotekun commander and two operatives fingered for the killings were apprehended, detained and transferred to Eleweran, Abeokuta.

"We later found that the men had since been freed following the intervention of a popular politician in Ijebu-Ode, and we felt bad that they were granted bail without our knowledge in a bid to sweep the matter under the carpet.

"However, we want justice because the matter cannot die down like that."

Explaining the cruelty she suffered at the hands of the operatives, Mrs. Kafilat Olamilekan, who was brutalised by the men for allegedly demanding explanation for Femi's arrest, said she was still nursing the fracture she suffered.

"We were seated outside when gunshots boomed sporadically and Femi ran into the house while the operatives ran after him and asked us to bring him out.

"He was dragged out and shot on the leg. I told one of the operatives that Femi is our neighbour and that we wanted to know the reason for his arrest only for the operative to hit my arm with the butt of his gun and I suffered a fracture.

"It was few minutes later that we learnt that Femi died after he was again shot several times.

"I told the operatives that Femi was an unassuming young man and I think that got the operative who brutalised me angry. I have since been nursing the wound on my hand despite spending several thousands of naira on treatment."

Meanwhile, a human rights group, International Human Rights and Anti-Corruption Society, has urged police authorities to bring the killers of Ilori and Jamilu to justice.



• Ilori



• Olamilekan



• Danjuma

The group, in a letter signed by Coordinator, Comrade Tai Titi Adams, dated June 17, 2021 and addressed to the Commissioner of Police, Ogun State, said a full scale investigation was in order "to unravel the circumstances leading to the death of the two victims."

Comrade Adams added that the two men suspected to have shot the victims dead had since been released on bail by the police.

Contacted, the spokesman of Ogun State Police Command, Mr. Abimbola Oyeyemi, said there was no way police could have released murder suspects irrespective of their connections or status in the society.

"What happened may not be the way it was portrayed to you because there is no way murder suspects would have been released on bail no matter how highly placed or connected.

"It could be that they had been investigated and found that they were not connected to the murder."

Oyeyemi promised to find out more about the case and get back to our correspondent. He, however, had not done so at press time.