

Crisis looms in Ondo varsity over killing of another student



- ***...three weeks after two others were abducted, murdered***
- ***Decomposing body found three days after declared missing***
- ***Students protest, accuse indigenes of orchestrating killings***
- ***Police arrest three suspects***

A fresh crisis is looming at the **Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba-Akoko (AAUA)**, Ondo State over the killing of another student identified as Joy Adeyemi.

Adeyemi, an undergraduate student of the Department of Human Kinetics in the state owned-institution, was killed on Tuesday, following which she was declared missing by course mates.

Her decomposed body was discovered in a one-room apartment in the university community; a development that sparked angry reaction and protest among her bereaved colleagues yesterday.

The latest incident came barely three weeks after two students of the school, Andrei Okah of the Department of History and International Studies and John Abba of the Department of Economics were allegedly abducted and killed by their landlord.

A fortnight ago, Oladele, who was arrested by the police as a prime suspect in the murder case, later died in the hospital after developing a strange illness.

Angered by the recurring incident, the students of the institution took to the streets yesterday, protesting the violent killing of their colleagues.

The protesters blocked major roads, saying the protest was triggered by the murder of Ms Adeyemi, who was allegedly stabbed to death by her boyfriend who is currently on the run.

Carrying placards with different inscriptions such as "AAUA students are not goats to indigenes; "Stop killing us; "We are here to study, not to die"; the protesting students accused the indigenes of the community of masterminding the killings.

One of the protesters, who identified himself as Kunle, said some neighbours discovered the dead body of Ms Adeyemi inside the room following a stench that oozed from the building.

He explained that the mystery behind the killing was yet unknown, revealing that the student, who also operates a point of sales (POS) shop around the campus, was gruesomely murdered.

"Since Tuesday, she (Adeyemi) disappeared and nobody knew her whereabouts until the neighbours perceived a bad odour from the room and found her corpse.

"They discovered that she had been stabbed to death by someone they alleged to be her boyfriend and indigene of Akungba town.

"After killing her, the guy went away with the money she used for her POS business," he added.

Condemning the killings, Kunle said the school, the police and the state government must find a solution to the security challenges in the university and the community at large.

He said: "It is high time the state government finds an urgent solution to the killing of our students by the indigenes of this town.

"If nothing is done, this may lead to a serious crisis in this community.

"You remember that some weeks ago, two of our students were also kidnapped and killed.

"So, something has to be done."

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Olayinka Ayanlade, confirmed the killing, revealing that three suspects had been arrested by the security agencies in connection with the murder case.

“We have arrested three suspects and we are making efforts to arrest other fleeing suspects while investigation is ongoing,” Ayanlade told our correspondent on the phone.

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Meanwhile, the Students' Union Government (SUG) of the institution and the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) have condemned the latest killing, expressing dismay at repeated violent attacks on students.

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Comrade Salami Akeem, SUG President of the institution, in a statement issued yesterday, accused the indigenes of the host community of orchestrating many of the attacks and killing of his colleagues.

Akeem recalled how they received the shocking news of two of their colleagues, Okah and Abbah, who were murdered after they were kidnapped for several days.

He explained that they were “alarmed to learn that the primary suspects in the crime are indigenes of the host community”, noting that the matter was taken up, and the police were actively engaged in collaboration with key stakeholders within the Akungba community, ” in the hope that such an unfortunate incident would not reoccur.

“However, to our greatest shock, we were once again confronted with the devastating news of another student who was murdered by her boyfriend, who is also an indigene of the host community.

“From available information, the student was brutally murdered — stabbed to death and left in his room for more than three days.

“The body was only discovered after neighbours noticed a foul odour emanating from the room, prompting them to break down the door, whereupon they found the decomposing corpse of the young woman.

“It was also gathered that the boyfriend is currently on the run. Although his mother has been arrested, the suspect remains at large.”

The student union body, however, issued “a 24-hour ultimatum” to the state government, the police and all relevant authorities to come to the aid of students and put an end to the gruesome and incessant killings in the Akungba community.

“We make this demand in the spirit of solidarity and comradeship, and without fear of contradiction, to seek justice for our fallen students.

“We also wish to state clearly that if the perpetrators of this heinous crime are not brought to book within the stipulated timeframe, the Students’ Union Body will not hesitate to embark on full-scale protests in a bid to permanently halt the continuous killing of our students.”

Also, NANS – Joint Campus Committee condemned the killings in a statement signed by its chairman and the secretary Adekanye Adeboye and Oladele Emmanuel, respectively.

It also called on the security agencies to bring the perpetrators to book without any delay, threatening to mobilise a mass of Nigerian students to the state for protest if the “senseless killings” did not stop.

The students’ body also demanded the implementation of robust security measures to prevent further attacks on students and ensure the safety and security of all students within the university and its environs.

“As a body saddled with the responsibility overseeing the general affairs and welfarism of all Nigerian students, we strongly condemn these heinous acts and demand immediate action from the Ondo State Government and all security operatives responsible for safeguarding lives and property within the state.

“The incessant killings are a clear indication of a security lapse that must be addressed urgently,” the statement said.

But reacting, the spokesperson for the institution, Victor Akinpelumi, called on the students to avoid taking the law into their hands.

Akinpelumi, who commiserated with the students, noted that the management was making frantic efforts with the police and other security agencies in ensuring maximum protection of the institution’s students.

He therefore pleaded with the protesting students to allow the security agencies to carry out thorough investigation on the matter.

“We are only appealing to the students not to take the law into their hands and they should allow the police to do thorough investigation, and I am sure justice will be served on the perpetrators,” he said.