

Controversy as 65-year-old farmer is found dead in Igangan

By Wale Akinselure

A 65-year-old man, Bashiru Akinlotan, was found dead about 20 metres away from his razed 12 acres cocoa plantation, in Igangan, Oyo State, on Wednesday.

The circumstances that led to Akinlotan's death, however, remained unclear as of Thursday.

While some claim that yet-to-be-identified assailants snuffed life out of Akinlotan after razing his plantation, others hold that the victim may have died out of shock of discovering that his farm had been set ablaze.

Family members were said to have become edgy when the deceased who had gone to the farm did not return, only to later discover the corpse.

The matter was said to have been reported at the Igangan Police Station after which the corpse was released to the family at about 8:00 pm on Wednesday.

When contacted, the spokesperson for the Nigeria Police, Oyo State Command, Olugbenga Fadeyi, confirmed the death.

He said plan by the police to conduct an autopsy on the corpse to unravel the death was frustrated by the deceased's family who insisted on burying the corpse according to Islamic rites.

He, however, called on the members of the public with useful information to make the same available to the police to unravel the mystery surrounding the death.

Fadeyi said "As we were told, he went to the farm and he didn't return on

time. The people traced him and found his corpse along the path to his farm, not too far from there, but not on his farm.

"And then, they checked his body and there was no mark of violence according to the report. No wound, no gunshot or nothing.

"They called the police and the police went there, took his corpse and wanted to take him to the mortuary for an autopsy, but the family members refused, claiming they didn't want any vacuum and then they said they needed to take the corpse away for burial according to Islamic rites.

"And when they insisted, the police had to release the corpse to them.

"Notwithstanding, an investigation has commenced and police is looking into the matter.

The secretary of Igangan Farmers Association, Mr Taiwo Adeagbo, alias Akowe Agbe, said he led those who reported the case to the Divisional Police Officer (DPO), at Igangan Police Station.

"We met him dead around 5.30p.m. about 20 metres away from his 12-acre cocoa plantation. Akinlotan was about 65 years of age.

Also speaking on the incident, the Oyo State Security Network Agency (Amotekun), said the deceased met his untimely death while trying to quench off the fire on his farm.

The Corps said the deceased was not attacked by any herder or any other person.

Oyo Amotekun Commandant, Colonel Olayinka Olayanju (ret'd), in a terse statement said "Akinlotan

from Gbogi compound, Isale Akao Area, Igangan, died inside his farm at Itigbo, Apodun road, Igangan on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the Ibarapa Traditional Council, Oyo State, has declared that calm has been restored to the zone with residents now free to go about their normal duties without fear.

The Onidere of Idere-land, Oba Aderoju Kingsley, made this declaration after several traditional rulers of Ibarapa zone met with Governor Seyi Makinde at the Government House, Ibadan, the state capital, on Thursday.

According to Oba Aderoju, who is the General Secretary of the Ibarapa Traditional Council, calm was restored to the zone after Makinde's recent tour of Ibarapa.

He added that the zone

was on its way to attaining supreme peace with the state government to inaugurate peace and security committees in each of the three local government areas on February 15.

Aderoju said, "We have discussed at length with the governor and the governor promised us that he is going to look into the matter and we are going to have a statutory meeting, especially in our areas to see to the welfare of the people of Ibarapa.

"The governor also promised to set up a Peace and Security committees in the three local government areas of Ibarapa and will use Ibarapa as a test case.

"Since governor came down to Ibarapa, the situation in the area has become calm and everybody is now free to go to the places they wish to go."

Oyo/Osun Customs officers seize