

Tension in Ogun community over death of Agbekoya member detained over Fulani man's death

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PALPABLE tension has gripped residents of Ipaye in Yewa North Local Government Area of Ogun State following the death of a member of the Agbekoya Vigilante Group, Shola Adeleke, who was arrested over the death of a Fulani herder.

The deceased securityman had only worked for a week at a farm where he was employed when he was arrested by policemen from Aiyetoro police station and later transferred to the state police headquarters, Eleweran, where he died.

It was gathered that Adeleke died at the headquarters of the Ogun State police command, Eleweran, which then prompted the police to release his three co-detainees, while the whereabouts of another detainee is still unknown.

Over 300 residents and workers have since relocated from the area following apprehension that either the **Agbekoya** group or Fulani might attack the community.

The employer of the deceased, Seun Adegoke, narrated that "on May 22, 2021, I received a phone call from the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of Aiyetoro police station in Yewa North Local Government Area of the state, where he informed me that the corpse of a Fulani man was found around the area where we have our farm in Ipaye village, off Anigbado.

"I then asked him if the said corpse was found on our farm, which he said no.

"However, he said considering it is a suspected murder case, he would like my workers to come in for possible questioning to help enhance police investigations.

"As a law-abiding Nigerian

with massive investments in the area, I immediately summoned my farm managers and security team to report and support the police investigations in anyway.

"I must state that the police never came to arrest anyone; I told my workers to report at the station to support police efforts, but little did I know that this would be the worst decision I would ever make.

"To our surprise, our security men were detained upon arrival the following day and subsequently asked to make statements."

According to the farm owner, the Agbekoya members, Olaitan Oluwaseun, Jimoh Ibraheem, Wasiu Adeshina, Hakeem Elegbede and the deceased Shola Adeleke, were detained by the police on the insistence of the Investigating Police Officer.

"To my surprise, on May 28, I got a distress call that one of our securitymen, Adeleke, had died in custody in circumstances the police could not explain.

"Upon his death, the police hurriedly released the three other members of our security team. My question is, if truly there was ever a murder charge, why would the police release the remaining suspects the same day that one of them died in their custody?"

The farm owner also said that prior to the incident, the farm had lost over N50 million naira to destruction of crops to cattle grazing on the farm by herdsman.

Efforts to get the reaction of the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) in charge of the command, Abimbola Oyeyemi, failed as calls to his mobile phone line were not answered as of the time of filing this report.