

Family petitions Jonathan over son's killing

Mike Odiegwu, Yenagoa

THE family of Mr. Freddie Ockiya, who was allegedly battered to death by the scrapped police outfit in Bayelsa State, codenamed Operation Famou Tangbei, has petitioned President Goodluck Jonathan. The lawyer for the family, Mr. Ken Atsuweta, filed a suit in the Federal High Court seeking justice for the Ockiyas over the alleged murder of their 21-year-old son. The Inspector-General of Police, the Commissioner of Police, Bayelsa State, Chief Medical Director, Federal Medical Centre, Yenagoa and Chief Richard Kpudoh, the Special Adviser on Security to Governor Timipre Sylva, were included as respondents to the suit. According to the petition dated September 22, 2011 Freddie, a student of the University of Port Harcourt, was arrested by OFT on September 12. Seven operatives of the outfit were said to have raided the compound of the victim at 6am and arrested him after destroying some property in the area, beating and manhandling everyone in the house.

After ransacking the compound for arms and shooting sporadically into the air, the operatives were said to have whisked their victim to an unknown destination. But the family members were said to have searched all the police stations, including the "concentration camp" of the dreaded outfit in vain for Freddie. The search continued until the family members reportedly discovered the body at the mortuary of the Federal Medical Centre, Yenagoa. He told the News Agency of Nigeria Benin on Tuesday that the state government had applied for the fund several times but got nothing, in spite of the state's myriad ecological problems.

According to the petition, a close examination of the body has revealed that the late Ockiya was tortured to death by the operatives of the outfit which was referred to as "a killer squad." The family was said to have been informed that a Hilux van of the operatives marked By OFT 12 brought the body to the mortuary and that one of the operatives, who identified himself as Oba, deposited the corpse at the hospital on September 13, a day after he was arrested. Oshiomhole said the state government had produced a document on the problem, size, character and modest cost of fighting environmental challenges such as erosion which had been ravaging parts of the state. The governor told NAN that the state had applied for funds to fight the ecological problems directly, but that the Federal Government awarded contracts for ecological remediation to a contractor,

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