

31-year-old drowns as command raids hideouts

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Samuel Awoyinfa, Abeokuta

A 31-year-old man, Gafar Ajibola, drowned on Saturday in a river in Ogun State after some policemen raided some alleged criminal hideouts in Oniyanrin community in Abeokuta.

The victim was reportedly washing clothes at the bank of the river at the time the policemen stormed the community, shooting into the air. He was said to have jumped into the river out of fear.

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His corpse was said to have floated on Sunday.

The state Police Public Relations Officer, Abimbola Oyeyemi, who confirmed the incident, however, said the policemen did not cause the death of Gafar.

He said the police were in the community to carry out their constitutional duties.

He added that the police had set up a team to unravel the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Oyeyemi, an Assistant Superintendent of Police, said, "The information I got was that the police had gone to raid criminal hideouts in the community, as there are places in that area known for harbouring criminals.

"Some suspects were arrested and after investigation, some were released.

"It is surprising that someone jumped into the river when the police were performing their duties in the area.

"The Commissioner of Police has ordered investigation into the matter. I am assuring you that if any policeman is found culpable, the law will take its course."

Speaking to *PUNCH Metro* at the river bank, where the corpse of Gafar was recovered, an uncle of the victim, Gbadero Gbadela, said he was informed about the incident on the telephone by some family members.

He said, "They called me on the telephone that some policemen were shooting sporadically and my brother's son, who was washing his clothes by the river bank, jumped into the river.

"We immediately started searching for him. We found his corpse today."

Another family member, Tajudeen Ajibola, demanded that justice must be done, adding that, "Or else, the family may take legal action against the police."

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