

Woman demands justice over son's death in police custody

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File: Inspector-General of Police, Mohammed Adamu

Peter Dada, Akure

A woman, Mrs Comfort Olanusimi, has appealed to the Assistant Inspector-General of Police in charge of Zone 11 to investigate the death of her son Aanu Olanusimi, who allegedly died while in police custody.

The lawyer to Comfort, Mr Fidolyn Akindiose, who sent a petition to the AIG, said, Aanu was alleged to have stolen cocoa beans from one Chief Akinruli's farm at Irikose, Ago Oni Rice village, in Idanre Local Government Area of Ondo State on

September 4, 2019 and he was thereafter arrested by a police officer identified as Londo from the Idanre division on the orders of Akinruli.

The legal practitioner alleged that after the arrest, the news came to Aanu's mother that her son had died, alleging that the police refused to release the corpse of the deceased to the family for burial.

Akindiose said, "On November 4, 2019, she (Comfort) was with her son, Aanu, at the farmland camp when one Chief Akinruli of Idanre and a police officer from Idanre Divisional Police station came to arrest her son. In inquiry for the offence committed, she and her son were told that Aanu had been stealing cocoa seeds from Akinruli's farmland as was reported by his labourer.

"Her son then followed Akinruli and the police officer on a motorcycle to the police station. While our client was getting ready to go to the police station, another motorcyclist came to tell her that her son was vomiting on the road and had been taken to the state hospital in Idanre.

"She was later told that her son has been transferred to the State Hospital Akure. Very early the next day, when she got to the state hospital, Akure she was told that her son had died."

Akindiose noted that before the arrest of the deceased, he was hale and hearty, without any complaint of illness.

"Up to this moment, the body of our client's son has not been released to her," the lawyer alleged.

He further stated that the police had allegedly come up with a report that the deceased drank poison shortly before the arrest.

He said, “It is our contention that the acts of the said Chief Akinruli, his labourer and the Investigating Police Officer, known as Londo constitute criminal acts to wit; false accusation, professional negligence, criminal conspiracy, murder and failure to produce corpse.

“It is our appeal to the AIG to use his office to take over the case from the homicide section of the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department, Ondo State Police Command, for further investigation and for the release of Aanu’s corpse, so that justice can be done.”

The Police Public Relations Officer in Ondo, Mr Femi Joseph, denied the allegation, saying the police had no power not to release the corpse to the family.

“The Commissioner of Police has waded into the matter and the family can approach the DPO of Idanre to collect the corpse, it is not true that we are withholding the corpse.”

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