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Boy dies as hoodlums attack Ondo ex-monarch home

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FILE

Peter Dada, Akure

Hoodlums, numbering about 50, on Thursday night, allegedly attacked the residence of the deposed monarch of Ugboland in the Ilaje Local Government Area of Ondo State, Adebanjo Mafimisebi, allegedly leading to the death of a boy.

The seven-year-old boy, identified as Marvelous Akintubuwa, was allegedly thrown into the river by the bandits and his corpse was discovered floating on Friday morning.

Following the attack, the Mafimisebi's family had petitioned the state governor, Mr Rotimi Akeredolu, and security agencies in the state, informing them about the development.

The petition, signed by a legal practitioner, Mr Idowu Mafimisebi, alleged that the hoodlums were sponsored by the current Olugbo of Ugboland, Oba Frederick Akinruntan.

The petition read in part, "Our clients informed us that sometime in November, 2019, Obateru Akinruntan (the Olugbo of Ugbo) instructed his thugs to repaint the houses of Dr Adebanjo Mafimisebi, formerly the Olugbo of Ugbo, and claimed that he had control over the property because he was now the Olugbo of Ugbo and threatened that he would eject the family of the former Olugbo out of the premises.

"In reaction, an action in suit No AK/ 125/2019, Dr Adebanjo Mafimisebi vs. Obateru Akinruntan was filed to challenge the acts of trespass of Obateru Akinruntan over our client's property.

"In reaction to the suit, our clients told us that Oba Obateru Akinruntan filed his statement of defence on 12th February, 2020 and in further reaction, the claimant filed his reply to the statement of defence and hearing notice for the pre-trial conference on 16th March, 2020, meaning that the matter was ripe for trial before the COVID-19 pandemic that led to the lockdown of the entire country and consequently delaying the hearing of the suit."

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It added, "Our clients informed us that in the early hours of the 16th of April, 2020 when the thugs of Obateru Akinruntan forcibly broke into the houses of our clients built within the land in dispute and started dispossessing them of their money, certificates and other useful documents kept within the houses and threw them outside the premises of their building naked."

But Oba Frederick Akinruntan denied the allegation, saying he knew nothing about the attack.

"I am a king; he (Mafimisebi) is my subject, how would I be destroying his property and his family members, I don't know anything about it. Those accusing me are my detractors who are out to smear my reputation," Akinruntan said.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Mr Tee-Leo Ikoro, who confirmed the attack, said it was a communal crisis and normalcy had returned to the town.

"The state deputy governor and the commissioner of police have visited the town and normalcy has returned," Ikoro said.