

Widow, community tackle Delta monarch over man killed during ritual

Matthew Ochei 21 September 2021

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Delta State Commissioner of Police, Mohammed Ali

The woman whose husband was killed during an invasion of Otulu community in the Aniocha South Local Government Area of Delta State, Mrs Chidinma Ozumba, has demanded justice for him.

She also requested that his body be released to the family for burial.

The traditional ruler of Ogwashi-Uku, HRM Obi Ifechukwude Okonjo, had stormed the community on Friday to perform certain traditional rites when the deceased, Cletus Ozumba, was allegedly shot dead.

The monarch, who is the younger brother of the Director-General of the World Trade Organisation, Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, was said to have claimed that Utulu community was a satellite town of his kingdom.

The widow, Chidinma, who blamed the monarch for the killing, urged the Delta State Government to bring the killers of her husband to book.

She recalled that on the day of the incident, her husband told her that he was going to the farm to check their watermelon, adding that some hours later, she was told that he had been killed.

Chidinma said, "I could not figure out what exactly happened between my husband and his killers; my husband was not a troublemaker for the five years that we were married as husband and wife.

"We never fought for one day and I never saw him fight anywhere; I was surprised to hear that my husband was shot dead.

“I am begging the Delta State governor to give my late husband justice because we are peasant farmers; who will assist me to raise the children he left behind? We are also begging that his remains should be released to us for burial.”

The youth leader of the community, Mr Francis Oduano, lamented that the late Cletus was the fourth man the community was losing over the ownership of Otulu community.

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He said, “It was quite unfortunate that the traditional ruler of Ogwashi-uku will continue to humiliate poor farmers in Otulu. The monarch came with people to perform rituals at the community junction.

“After their incantations and sacrifices, they walked to the site where the community sold land intended to provide electricity with the proceeds, and started destroying the fence. On hearing a side talk from onlookers, an armed thug shot Cletus to death.

“The youth took to the street and held some of the men in the group before the arrival of the military. We have protested at the Government House before; the government promised to intervene in our matter. Till now, nothing has been done.”

The younger brother of the monarch, Prince Onyema Okonjo, said a youth was wounded “by a stray bullet from the gun of one of the security agents, who the victim was trying to disarm.”

The state Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Bright EDAFE, said the corpse had been taken to a mortuary for an autopsy.

He said, "We did not seize the corpse; it was taken to a mortuary for an autopsy; unless they write to the police that they don't want a case, we will follow due process before the corpse will be released to them."