

One killed, nine houses razed in Oyo community land dispute

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The Oyo State Police Command has arrested nine persons in connection with a violent land dispute that led to the death of a septuagenarian, Rachael Bamidele, in the Aagba community, Surulere Local Government Area of the state.

The incident, which occurred on April 5, also resulted in the burning of nine houses and the looting of properties worth millions of naira.

Police spokesperson in the state, Adewale Osifeso, disclosed in a statement on Thursday that the violence was allegedly carried out by residents of a neighbouring community over a long-standing land dispute.

Osifeso said the burning, looting and destruction of property appear to have been calculated and systematically carried out, targeting individuals involved in an ongoing civil litigation over the disputed land.

Osifeso said the incident has forced occupants to desert the village.

He explained that the command responded to the attack on April 5 at the community, saying that following the developments, the state Commissioner of Police, Johnson Adenola, deployed the command’s specialised intelligence and tactical assets, including a unit of PMF officers, to the village to ensure public safety.

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He stated, “This prompt response brought about a restoration of normalcy, allowing villagers to return to their homes and resume daily activities without fear of harassment or intimidation.

“Investigations led to the apprehension of one Salawudeen Ismaila, aged 33, a native of neighbouring Oko community, and eight other suspects, as well as the recovery of three unregistered Boxer motorcycles.

“Efforts are ongoing to apprehend other known suspects who remain at large. The indicted suspects will soon appear in court.

“The state command reaffirms its zero tolerance towards all acts of brigandage or any other act that undermines the efforts of the state government and security agencies and threatens the peace and tranquillity of residents of the state.”

The command also warned against self-help in the resolution of disputes.